THE SPEAKER

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1892.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN did not speak in the debate on Welsh Disestablishment—for the simple reason that it would have been too ludicrous for the new Liberal Unionist leader in the House to pose as the mouthpiece of five followers. Such was the beggarly contingent which trooped after MR. CHAMBERLAIN into the division lobby. On an important question of policy the Liberal Unionist chief was deserted by his party, and did not venture in these depressing circumstances to explain how his views could ever be realised by a Unionist Government. MR. CHAMBERLAIN had to munch the leek of silence while SIR EDWARD CLARKE invoked St. Paul as a friend of the Establishment, and MR. BALFOUR asserted that envy and not piety was the motive spirit of the Welsh demand. This was vexatious enough to MR. CHAMBERLAIN, but even worse was the recollection of LORD HARTINGTON'S declaration in Scotland that the wishes of the Scotch people ought to determine the fate of the Established Church. Had the Liberal Unionists voted on that principle, the Government would have had a disastrous majority of three.

IT is the cue of the Ministerial journals to pretend that the contumely which has been heaped on the Irish Local Government Bill is a theatrical device of the Opposition. How do they explain the hostility of MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S organ, the *Birmingham Post*? MR. MORLEY, speaking at Reading on Wednesday, could only somewhat intensify its comprehensive objections. Is MR. MACLEAN, the Tory member for Oldham, a confederate of MR. MORLEY and SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT? MR. MACLEAN has expressed his contempt for the Bill with delightful candour, supplemented by some personal reflections on MR. BALFOUR and LORD SALISBURY which must be very agreeable to those eminent statesmen. Is MR. MACLEAN one of the fifty-nine Tories who do not mean to stand again at the General Election? However that may be, his disgust with his leaders cannot be called a theatrical device, and it is undoubtedly symptomatic of a good deal of feeling on the Tory benches.

LORD ROSEBERY'S wise and generous resolve to join in the battle for municipal progress which he brilliantly led three years ago is a fit recognition of the vital issues involved, and an apt reply to SIR HENRY JAMES'S taunt that all the best men are leaving the London County Council. As for SIR HENRY JAMES'S speech, it is simply a proof that his Unionism, like that of others, was merely a first irruptive symptom of a reaction. His plea for holding the County Council in chains was throughout an argument for maintaining the state of things which the Municipal Corporations Act abolished for every considerable town and city in the United Kingdom, save the greatest in it and in the world. No man of sense, said SIR HENRY JAMES, would desire to revive the ante-Reform period. But he does not merely desire to revive it—he would perpetuate it in the great city-nation, which for over fifty years has had to content itself with the measure of independence enjoyed by a rural county or a petty borough of less than 20,000 inhabitants. As for the extension of the Council's powers costing London £100,000,000, it would at a sweep relieve it—for the three great services—gas, water, and tramways—of an annual tribute of £2,250,000, every farthing of which represents a needless addition to the London citizen's cost of living.

NOTHING is more striking in politics just now than the fighting spirit which pervades all ranks of the Liberal party. The enthusiastic meeting at Reading on Wednesday, which greeted MR. MORLEY'S crushing exposure of the Irish legislation of the Government, is only a sample of the meetings daily held, in London and the Provinces alike. The war has been carried into that Tory preserve, the agricultural districts just beyond the suburbs proper, than which no part of the United Kingdom is more urgently in need of political missionaries. The most significant instance of the response which awaits those missionaries is to be found in the contest at Chertsey. In spite of an impending General Election and an overwhelming Tory majority in 1885, the local Liberals are determined that the wealthy brewer whom the Tory wirepullers wish to force on the constituency shall not remain unopposed. Their candidate, MR. LAWRENCE BAKER, has a hard fight before him. Yet, whatever the result, the soil will be well stirred for the future growth of Liberalism. So it is all over London, the siege of which continues with unabated spirit. It remains to be seen this day week how far the bulwarks of apathy are undermined. As to the other impending bye-election in England—that of South Derbyshire—there can be no doubt of a Liberal success.

THE answer of MR. BALFOUR to the question of COLONEL HOWARD VINCENT as to the advisability of appointing a Select Parliamentary Committee to take evidence and report upon the burning social problem of the hour—Old-Age Pensions—was more cautious than satisfactory. Until some other fully elaborated plan than CANON BLACKLEY'S was before the public, he is reported to have said it would not be expedient to appoint another Committee. The whole point for granting an inquiry lies, as MR. MORLEY very wisely told his Friendly Society audience at Newcastle only the other day, in obtaining trustworthy evidence upon certain allegations put forward by the advocates of conflicting and competing proposals. To wait till one elaborately worked out proposal steps out before the others and demands the attention of Parliament, to the exclusion of these others, is just what is not wanted, and such a reply as that given by MR. BALFOUR looks very much like playing into the hands of the astute Member for West Birmingham. There are several schemes before the public, and it would be obviously unfair to deal with any one to the exclusion of others.

BUT accurate information with regard to what Friendly and Trade Societies have done, and are prepared to do, in the matter of providing their aged members with pensions or superannuation benefits; at what year of life old age may be said to overtake the different classes of working men and women (the "Friendly Societies' Year-Book" defines old age as any age *after* fifty); whether the average British workman will live to sixty-five to take his pension—these and other questions offer legitimate ground for full and free inquiry. And the best way of conducting

the inquiry will not be to bring a host of witnesses, already committed to this or that opinion, up to London, but (and here again MR. MORLEY showed true wisdom) to send unbiassed inspectors into typical districts, urban and rural, to conduct an inquiry on the spot, within reach of those who know, but who would, many of them, be the last to come forward as witnesses before a Select Committee.

MR. MOORE EDE, in the paper read on Wednesday evening to a numerous company at the quarterly dinner of the Political Economy Circle of the National Liberal Club, propounded a scheme based on weekly payments—since a very poor man cannot save the £5 which is to be the indispensable nucleus of his pension under MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S plan—and proposed to provide against a lapse of the benefit by permitting the payment of arrears at any time. To stimulate payment, part of the premiums might be returnable in the event of death before sixty-five. Collection might take place through employers, and State aid might be given by a special uniform local rate, which would of course partly replace the present Poor Rates. MR. EDE strongly objected to MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S proposal for collection through the Friendly Societies—which would involve a Government guarantee of the soundness of their finance—and suggested that it might be effected through employers. On the basis of actuarial calculations furnished by MR. REUBEN WATSON (a high authority), he concludes that if half the cost were borne by the State, men under thirty, at a cost of 2d. or 3d. per week, could secure £10 on death before sixty-five, or, if they survived that age, a pension of 5s. per week. Considering that, as MR. EDE pointed out, probably half the wage-earners who live till sixty-five now go upon the rates, there is certainly a strong case for further inquiry.

THE new Army Report is like its predecessors. It is the cry of the horse-leech's daughter. The country already pays nearly eighteen millions a year for its military forces, and now it is told that a further expenditure of nearly two millions annually is needed to supply us with at least a single effective battalion of infantry at home. When the Indian Army receives its complement, the Home Army, says LORD WOLSELEY, will be like a squeezed lemon. There has long been an urgent demand for reform at the War Office, and this Report exposes once more the incompetence of the present administration. It is absurd to suppose that for eighteen millions the War Office cannot make a better show of efficiency. For useless expenditure and incorrigible blundering this department has no peer.

THE advocates of women's suffrage in the House of Commons are not very adroit. They tried to defeat MR. PROVAND'S Shop Hours Bill on the ground that any legislation affecting women ought to be postponed till women had the franchise. The logic of this argument will scarcely be appreciated by the thousands of women in shops who are anxious to have some curtailment of their toil. What reception do MR. WALTER MCLAREN and his friends think they would get if they were to tell these shop-assistants that any shortening of hours must wait till women are empowered to send representatives to Parliament? It is wrong for men, elected by a franchise which excludes women, to legislate even for women's pressing needs. This is a sufficient illustration of the practical side of the women's suffrage movement.

EX-GOVERNOR HILL has received the Presidential nomination from the New York State Democratic Convention, in opposition to MR. CLEVELAND. We feared that this would be the result of MR. HILL'S scheming. The political machine and its corrupt elements have for the present triumphed over honest reformers. MR. CLEVELAND'S followers in the State held aloof from HILL'S "snap" Convention, and have called another Convention for the end of May. All now depends on MR. CLEVELAND'S strength with the people. His popularity is great throughout the country; but unless he is the nominee of his own State, he cannot very well secure the Presidential nomination at the National Democratic Convention. New York must be united on a candidate, as it has the deciding voice in the election. MR. HILL is an impossible candidate, but it is probable that MR. CLEVELAND will have to stand aside in consequence of MR. HILL'S rivalry. MR. HENRY MATTERSON, of Louisville, the leading Democrat in the South, favours the selection of a Western man for the Presidential candidate; and unless the nation insists on MR. CLEVELAND, and disregards disunion in New York, a less well-known and less popular man will have to be chosen. At present MR. CLEVELAND'S chances are not very hopeful; but it is yet four months before the National Convention is held, and the issues may be cleared up during that time.

OWING to the collection of the revenue, which is always on an exceptionally large scale in February and the first half of March, the supply of loanable capital in the outside market has become scarce, even though the return of coin and notes from the circulation is very considerable. Consequently the bill-brokers have had to borrow very largely from the Bank of England during the week ended Wednesday night—as much, in fact, as, in round figures, a million and a quarter—and as a natural consequence the rate of discount in the open market has risen to $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The Bank return issued on Thursday, however, showed so large an increase in the reserve that the market was somewhat weakened. Still, the supply of loanable capital will remain small for two or three weeks yet. Owing to this, and owing partly also to the near approach of the end of the month, when the Joint Stock banks make up their accounts, many of the banks called in money which had been lent to the Stock Exchange at the beginning of the fortnightly settlement on Wednesday morning, and in consequence there was a larger demand for the Stock Exchange than has been seen for months past. The rate charged averaged about $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., and in many cases was considerably higher. The silver market during the week has been very quiet. After a fall the price has recovered to $41\frac{9}{16}$d. per oz.; but the market is weak and the tendency uncertain. The demand for remittances to India is very strong indeed, and again on Wednesday the application for India Council Bills and telegraph transfers was on a great scale. It is this demand for India which keeps up the price of silver.

THE feeling on the Stock Exchange has again been very anxious this week, and at times inclined towards panic. Alarmist rumours were again revived, and several names were made free with. West End banks, country banks, and financial houses were all spoken of; but the chief apprehension is respecting Trusts. There is no doubt, of course, that many of the Trusts have involved themselves in exceedingly bad business, that their losses have been large, and that where the losses may ultimately be recovered there is for the time being a very serious lock-up of capital. But all the same the scare just now is overdone. Owing to the uneasy feeling, prices generally have given way, business has been exceedingly inactive, and even investors are holding aloof, while speculation, except for the fall, is completely stopped. Upon the Continent the difficulties of Greece are adding to the apprehensions that exist, and even in the United States there is depression, partly due to doubts respecting Europe, and partly to the fall in silver, cotton, and wheat, and to the exports of gold.

THE HARTINGTON CONTROVERSY.

IT is not necessary that we should say much respecting the controversy which has raged during the past week over the statement first published in this journal a fortnight ago regarding the action of the present Duke of Devonshire in 1880. The Tory press has displayed about the usual amount of wisdom and calmness it has at its command when it is called upon to deal with a problem which is new and surprising, and we have had to encounter the usual amount of fair-play from those who seem to think that every publicist must necessarily be animated by motives as mean as those which prevail with themselves. For the personal slanders, the abuse, and the misrepresentation which have been heaped upon us in connection with this matter, we have only one feeling—the indifference springing from an utter contempt for our assailants. If it pleases sundry journalists of the baser sort to believe that we have "invented" a serious statement regarding a political crisis in the history of our country, or have purloined it from the private papers of some dead statesman, or picked it up from the loose gossip of Pall Mall, by all means let them do so. Accusations of this sort do not touch us. There is only one point, indeed, upon which we think it necessary to offer a word in vindication of our own action. That is as to the origin and motive of the statement we have made. It is represented by sundry clumsy disputants as a display of "Gladstonian malignity," and by others as an accusation of dishonourable conduct against the Duke of Devonshire. These charges reflect little credit upon the intelligence of our modern journalists. We have never attacked the Duke; we have not uttered a discourteous word regarding him; we have never blamed him for his action in 1880. We had no right to do so, nor did it ever occur to us to do so. What we have done has been to meet a truly "malignant" charge made against Mr. Gladstone by a simple and colourless statement of facts, proving that this charge was as wanton as it was malignant. It is chiefly, we observe, on the part of those who were most prominent in spreading the slander against Mr. Gladstone that there is this simulated indignation against us for our imagined "attack" on the Duke of Devonshire.

To come to the point, however, we have to observe, in the first place, that our statement remains without refutation or attempt at refutation. By that statement, in spite of the impudent assertion of the *Daily Chronicle* that we have "withdrawn" it, we abide. We have had "authorised" and unauthorised declarations touching the question in abundance. They have differed in every imaginable respect but one, and that is in the care which they have taken not to grapple with the real question at issue. Take the letters paraded in the *Times* on Monday and Wednesday. They told us a great deal about Lord Hartington's views concerning the Premiership before and during the crisis of 1880, and we do not doubt that they have told us a great deal that is perfectly true. Lord Hartington, who was then in close touch with the Liberal party, is a man of shrewdness and ability. He must have known from the first that to attempt to put anyone but Mr. Gladstone at the head of the Government after the General Election, which had been won by Mr. Gladstone's efforts, would have been to court immediate and irretrievable disaster. We can quite believe his henchmen when they say that he laid this view before his colleagues and the Queen. But what they do not say is whether he did or did not allow his own judgment in this matter to be overborne at the critical moment when the Premiership was actually offered to him, and he thus had the blue riband of English politics within his grasp. The question which Lord Hartington must answer, if this matter is to be cleared up by his action, has been stated briefly and clearly: "Did he consult anybody with a view to forming a Government after his interview with the Queen, and did he ask anybody whether he would be willing to join such a Government if it were formed?" That question was put directly to the Duke of Devonshire in the *Times* of last Tuesday, and our original statement was printed two weeks ago; but neither to the original statement nor to the direct appeal has the Duke vouchsafed a word of reply. His late private secretary, Mr. Brett, has had the assurance to tell us that a plain Aye or No cannot be given to a question which is of the simplest and plainest kind; whilst another champion of the Duke declares that to answer the question would be a breach of the Constitutional practice which forbids the revelation of any communication which may pass between the Queen and her advisers, as though we had asked the Duke of Devonshire to reveal a single word of his communications with Her Majesty, and as though "Gladstonian," on behalf of the Duke, had not actually stated on Monday what was the advice he gave to the Sovereign!

In these circumstances it hardly seems necessary to continue the discussion. The silence of the Duke of Devonshire is only susceptible of one interpretation. Our challenge not having been met, we hold the field. But does that imply that we have brought any "charge" against the Duke in the sense in which that word is commonly understood, or that we are casting any imputation upon his honour as a man or a statesman? It implies nothing of the sort. What it does prove is that we were correct when we denied the truly malignant invention of those who declared that Mr. Gladstone only became Prime Minister in 1880 through the "magnanimity" of Lord Hartington; that he was consequently under "the deepest personal obligations" to Lord Hartington, and that his conduct in venturing to recommend a follower of his own to the electors of Rossendale at the late election was evidence of the fact that his was one of those depraved natures which find "gratitude" a burden too heavy to be borne, and which accordingly seek relief in turning upon the hand that has benefited them. This was the scandalous calumny which seemed to us to call for refutation; and we can only repeat that we regret exceedingly that the refutation did not proceed in the first instance from the Duke himself.

THE DUKE'S SQUIRES.

IT is not often that a spectacle quite so pleasing to the malicious as that which was offered by the *Times* of Monday last is presented to a cynical world. The reader who opened the broad sheet of the "leading journal" that morning found himself instantly confronted by a series of communications printed in the very biggest type which the editor of the paper has at his command. Two of these communications were in the form of Letters to the Editor, signed respectively "Gladstonian" and "Reginald B. Brett," and both purported to be a vindication of the Duke of Devonshire from the statement made in this journal that he had tried to form an Administration in 1880. Now as to the substance of that charge, the evidence on which it rests, and the extent to which it has been proved, we are not at all disposed to make light. We deal elsewhere with a question which affects the reputations of others besides the Duke of Devonshire. But here we may

be permitted to dwell upon the spectacle presented by "Gladstonian," Mr. Brett, and the editor of the *Times*—for the editor must needs join these superior persons in their attempt to vindicate the character of their illustrious patron, which, as it happened, had never been impeached. And first it is to be remarked that, however delightful may be youthful enthusiasm, especially when it is displayed in the service of a duke, it were well that it should be tempered with ordinary discretion. Otherwise the ardent squire will probably come to grief at the outset of his errand, as was the case with "Gladstonian" and Mr. Brett on Monday. Each gentleman was in so great a hurry to vindicate his exclusive claim to be the Duke's champion that in his rush into print he came into violent collision with the other, whereby both were seriously damaged. It happened in this wise. Knowing full well that the controversy in which they interposed their august personalities practically turned on the manner in which the Duke of Devonshire spent his time on April 22nd and 23rd, 1880, each had prepared his own authorised statement on the subject. The Duke, we were told, had "sanctioned" "Gladstonian's" communication (for all the world as though his Grace were a reigning monarch or a Mahatma), and it was to the effect that on the days in question he "neither saw nor communicated with any of his friends or former colleagues except Lord Granville and Mr. Gladstone." Mr. Brett did not plead anything so vague and unsubstantial as the undefined sanction of the Duke in support of *his* story. He gave it with the authority befitting one who had actually held a confidential post in the Duke's service—none other than the post of private secretary. His statement was that the Duke, instead of communicating only with Lord Granville and Mr. Gladstone, had informed certain colleagues and friends of the proposal which had been made by the Queen, and had been "fervently urged" by some of them to "attempt the formation of a Government."

These two statements, as the *Pall Mall Gazette* pointed out, cannot possibly be reconciled, and yet they are the key-notes to the theories advanced by their authors. What are we to say of an enthusiasm which led "Gladstonian" and Mr. Brett at the very outset of their noble task into this hopeless *impasse?* How grateful the Duke must have been to the brace of squires who could not even agree beforehand as to the weapons they were to use and the line of country they were to take in defence of their friend! For our part, we may very well leave them to fight it out together in the pit into which they have fallen.

So far as "Gladstonian" is concerned, we have no particular quarrel of our own with him. He is well-intentioned and usually well-informed, and his chief weakness, as we hinted last week, is a not wholly unfounded belief in his own omniscience. When he was attacked on that tender point, he was bound to defend himself; and though we may laugh at the pomp with which his "sanctioned" communication was given to the world, and at the credulity of the editor who gave it the honours of big type and the leading page, we give him full credit for being animated by nothing worse than a sincere desire to vindicate his own infallibility, which had been, as he plaintively announced, assailed "with scorn" in these pages a week ago.

Our case against Mr. Reginald B. Brett is of a different kind. This gentleman also belongs to the order of "superior persons," and in nothing else does he more clearly reveal his superiority to ordinary mortals than in his indifference to truth in the tittle-tattle it is his principal mission in life to vend. In the letter which appeared in the *Times* on Monday he made certain assertions which deserve serious attention, not because they have any value in connection with the controversy with which they professedly deal, but because they throw a good deal of light upon the character of Mr. Brett himself. It has pleased this gentleman to use quotation marks in imputing to us certain words which are not to be discovered in any one of the articles he professes to criticise. It is somewhat difficult to reconcile this act with honesty of intention on the part of the critic. Nor has he even the excuse for his trick which he might plead if he had reproduced our meaning in slightly altered language. He misrepresents not only the words he professes to quote textually, but the nature of our statements. He says that we charged Lord Hartington with having "sought" the leadership of the Liberal party in 1875. What we did say was that there was no reluctance on his part to accept that post when it was offered to him. Nor did we impute it to him as a matter for blame that this was the case. Here are our actual words: "Both he (Mr. Forster) and Lord Hartington were naturally moved by ambition, and when so splendid a post as the leadership of the Liberal party appeared to be within their reach, were both anxious to accept it." We said this in order to rectify the misrepresentations of certain Tory newspapers as to Lord Hartington's "unwillingness" to accept that particular post. There was no "suggestion" or "insinuation" of unworthy conduct on the part of Lord Hartington in anything we wrote.

But the gentleman who has the effrontery to charge us with having "insinuated" something—as though our language had not from the first been as clear and explicit as it could be—has himself, with the courage characteristic of such a person, not stated outright, but darkly insinuated, certain charges against other people. He begins by an insinuation against the editor of this journal. "A writer," he says, "either foraging for gossip among a dead man's papers, or listening to idle rumours, has thought fit," etc. Now, will Mr. Reginald Brett follow our example and say plainly what he means by this obscure insinuation? It is an untruth—of that we can assure him; and we could bring home its untruthfulness in two minutes, even to Mr. Reginald Brett's intelligence, if we cared to enter into any private communication with that gentleman. But what did he mean by insinuating a charge which he dare not make openly, and for which the only foundation is in his own malicious and distorted imagination? And what, again, does he mean by the insinuation which he levels against two dead men whose boots he was not worthy to black—Lord Granville and Mr. Forster? Here is the pretty accusation which this heroic and chivalrous gentleman, who is filled with indignation at our treatment of the Duke of Devonshire, dares to hint against the statesmen we have named:—"One is still living who could describe the device by which Lord Granville definitely secured Mr. Forster's resignation of his candidature so as just to forestall Lord Hartington's, which characteristically arrived somewhat late." We leave him to settle with the Duke of Devonshire the insinuation conveyed, though probably not meant, by the statement that Lord Hartington did not send in his resignation until it was too late to be of any avail. But "describe the device"! What dirty trick is hinted at under these words? Lord Granville was for many years the trusted friend and confidant of Mr. Forster. They believed in each other; they respected each other; they loved each other. Both are dead, and lo! Mr. Reginald Brett, in his chivalrous eagerness to pose as the champion of a living duke, rushes into print

with an insinuation which, if it means anything at all, means that Lord Granville was a knave who tricked Mr. Forster at a critical moment in the latter's career, and that Mr. Forster was a fool who fell an easy victim to the miserable "device." For our part, we believe this insinuation on the part of Mr. Brett to have no more foundation than that which he has made against ourselves.

But we may leave this unhappy person, who has incurred so many castigations by his excursions into the field of political controversy that we fear he is now too hardened an offender to feel even the reproof it is our duty to administer to him. There only remains the editor of the *Times*. Nothing more delightfully characteristic of the ways of that journal could be desired than is afforded by its action on Monday and Tuesday last. On Monday it parades, in its biggest type and in the most prominent part of the paper, the pompous inaccuracies and mutual contradictions of "Gladstonian" and Mr. Brett. It backs them up in a leading article in which it accuses THE SPEAKER of having charged Lord Hartington with trying to "form an Administration of his own, *to the exclusion of Mr. Gladstone*," although for this statement there was not a shadow of foundation. In short, THE SPEAKER and its editor are arraigned with all the pomp and circumstance which the *Times* invariably brings to bear upon the imaginations of its readers when it seeks to prejudice them against an innocent person. On Tuesday the editor of THE SPEAKER replies, and his letter is printed in small type and thrust into the obscurity of an inside page. We must really tender our grateful acknowledgments to the *Times* for this brilliant indication of its notions of fair-play and decency in debate. It explains fully how that journal is so universally loved and respected.

HOW THE *TIMES* FIGHTS.

IT is no satisfaction to us to find ourselves involved in a quarrel with the most powerful of English newspapers; nor do we anticipate any advantage or recompense from the duty which is imposed upon us of speaking some very plain words as to the methods of that journal in political controversy. We shall not follow the example of the *Times* and introduce into our observations the names of particular individuals. We are not dealing with a single journalist, but with a great newspaper. To the best of our belief, the gentlemen who hold leading positions on that paper are men of honour and integrity. It is, perhaps, rather their misfortune than their fault that they are the instruments of a system which habitually sets at defiance the ordinary rules of fair-play—we might say of common honesty—in political debate.

These are strong words, but we propose to justify them. On Thursday morning last the *Times* devoted a couple of letters and a very long leading article to the purpose of refuting—or, rather, of obscuring—the issue recently raised in these pages. Its purpose was to lead its readers to imagine that our plain statement of fact was not only a fabrication in itself, but was part of a malignant plot to damage the character of the Duke of Devonshire, with which it was pleased to associate the name of Mr. Gladstone. It saw, in short, in an innocent political controversy another opportunity of railing against the man whom it has pursued with rabid hatred and a reckless lack of self-restraint for more than a dozen years past. That Mr. Gladstone is unaffected by the calumnies of his band of nameless traducers, that he stands to-day as high as he ever did in the affection and the confidence of the majority of his fellow-countrymen, does not minimise the discreditable character of the tactics habitually used against him by the journal of Printing House Square.

Now, how did the controversy which has attracted so much attention originate? It began as far back as January 21st in a leading article in the *Times*, which professed to criticise the letter written by Mr. Gladstone to Mr. Maden, the Gladstonian candidate for Rossendale. We do not think that even in the gallery of *Times* invective anything quite so disgraceful as this outpouring of mendacious calumny is to be found. Here are the first sentences, quoted verbatim from that article:—

> "Somebody ought to make a collection of Mr. Gladstone's letters to Gladstonian candidates during the last six years, adding only a few brief notes to place the general reader in possession of the circumstances in which they were written, and a concise chronicle of events for convenience of reference. Such a compilation might safely be backed to contain more ungenerous detraction, disingenuous criticism, and malicious misrepresentation than any other equal quantity of letterpress in the world. Mr. Gladstone was never remarkable for chivalry or candour towards political opponents, but, since his great overthrow in 1886, he has placed still less restraint upon himself, and has treated his former supporters as persons against whom all weapons are lawful. His latest effort is the letter he has addressed to the Gladstonian candidate for Rossendale, in which he makes a gratuitous and unjust attack upon the Duke of Devonshire. It is worth noting in this connection that Mr. Gladstone is under the very greatest personal obligations to the Duke of Devonshire, who, with rare loyalty, undertook the reconstruction of the Liberal party when Mr. Gladstone reduced it to powder in 1874, and, having reconstructed it without help from his chief, retired in his favour and gave him a fresh lease of power. The burden of gratitude presses heavily upon certain natures, and this may be the reason why Mr. Gladstone is so much given to girding at his old lieutenant. At all events, he has gone a little too far this time, and has provoked a short and dignified but crushing rejoinder from the Duke of Devonshire."

We have quoted enough to show the character of the article, and we need not therefore refer to the insults which it heaped not only upon Mr. Gladstone himself but upon his followers of every degree. Something like them may be read almost every morning in the week in that particular leader in the *Times* which is devoted to Irish affairs. The noticeable fact, however, in the passage we have quoted is that it not merely heaps insults of the most outrageous kind upon a man whose stainless personal character is at least above suspicion, but that it falsifies in a manner which is almost ludicrous the facts of history. Mr. Gladstone is said to have reduced the Liberal party to powder in 1874. That charge at all events will not be supported by a reference to the columns of the *Times* in the year mentioned. No one acquainted with the facts would dream of making it. But then comes the declaration that the Duke of Devonshire, with "rare loyalty," reconstructed the party without help from his chief, and having done so retired in Mr. Gladstone's favour and "gave" him a fresh lease of power. Apparently the person who is responsible for these statements knows nothing of the part which Mr. Gladstone played in public affairs from the autumn of 1876 onwards; has never heard of the national uprising over the Bulgarian atrocities; and is in blissful ignorance of the fact that the man he maligns, in spite of the open hostility of some of his colleagues and the apathy of others, succeeded not only in reuniting—we might almost say in recreating—the Liberal party, but in absolutely reversing the policy of a Minister who was in office at the time with a majority of nearly a hundred at his back.

It was the extraordinary character of these statements of the *Times*, which were amplified in due course by those minor organs that follow steadily in its track, which led us to enter upon the present controversy. We do not see how any Liberal acquainted with the facts could remain silent when

these wanton and baseless charges, closely affecting his personal honour, were made against the Liberal leader; when on the foundation of a fictitious history fabricated by the *Times* for its own purposes, he was held up to scorn and contempt as one of those to whom gratitude is an intolerable burden, and whose delight it is to turn upon their benefactors and to rend them. In making our reply to the *Times* we were careful not to imitate its own controversial style. We uttered no single word of which the Duke of Devonshire can reasonably complain. We simply stated the facts as they were known to us. Among these facts was one which has hitherto been guarded with rare care. It is that fact the revelation of which has moved the *Times* and the whole body of Unionists to an outburst of rage which seems strangely disproportioned to the original cause. It is not with the evidence for or against our plain statement that we are dealing here, but with the way in which the *Times* is seeking to misrepresent the issue and to prejudice its readers against those who have raised that issue. The journal which opened the campaign by the indecent libel on Mr. Gladstone that we have quoted, has now the effrontery to turn round and charge not only ourselves but Mr. Gladstone with a discreditable attempt to stab the Duke of Devonshire in the back. It is difficult to see how a plain and dispassionate statement of fact made in the light of day, and which the Duke of Devonshire, if he were so inclined, could dispose of in a single sentence provided it were inaccurate, can be regarded as an attempt to stab that nobleman in the back. But, then, this is the playful way in which the *Times* has always sought to discredit those whom it dislikes.

Of the manner in which it has treated the editor of this journal in his defence of the statement he has made it is hardly necessary to speak. It began by asserting that we had charged Lord Hartington with trying to exclude Mr. Gladstone from office. The assertion was absolutely false. It has finished —though, indeed, we do not know whether it has yet finished — by accusing us of having disinterred an old story for political purposes and "dressed it up with many a *suppressio veri* and *suggesto falsi* to convey a calumnious charge." The old story which is said to have been dressed up in this manner consisted of exactly nine words, neither more nor less. The dressing-up which it has received has been from the *Times* and its correspondents. Thoroughly characteristic, as we remark elsewhere, is the fashion in which the editor of the *Times* has printed the correspondence of the last week. It is an old trick of his, more worthy, however, of the *Eatanswill Gazette* than of the leading journal of the Empire. Every communication which is in harmony with the view of the editor is printed in the most prominent manner; any attempt on the part of the person who has been attacked to defend himself is thrust into small type, and, as a rule, into the most obscure corner of the paper. A ludicrous instance of this has been seen during the present week, when Mr. Bryce has been treated in this fashion as a naughty boy; whilst Mr. Chamberlain, whom he has had the audacity to correct, has been given the glories attaching to the biggest type and the most prominent place in the paper. The editor of THE SPEAKER can hardly complain of treatment which he only receives in common with persons of much greater eminence. It is, however, a pretty illustration of the way in which the *Times* fights.

We have tried to throw some light upon the methods of that journal. We have shown that the newspaper which now has the effrontery to inveigh against the imaginary malignity of others, and to charge such a man as Mr. Gladstone with having taken part in a dirty plot against the reputation of the Duke of Devonshire, is itself the journal which began this controversy by flinging a handful of vulgar insults in Mr. Gladstone's face, and by distorting and misrepresenting historical events in order that it might bring against that statesman a charge from which even the meanest of men would naturally recoil. The *Times* is a great and powerful organ, with a vast organisation and an influence which makes it the most formidable of foes. Not lightly or willingly do we enter the lists against it; but in defence of the honour of English journalism, and of that justice which is demanded alike from the strong and the weak, we have ventured to set in its true light the conduct of the great newspaper in the present controversy.

YEOMEN BY ACT OF PARLIAMENT.

THE Small Agricultural Holdings Bill is an inadequate measure. None the less is it a remarkable sign of the times, the knell of an old system, the condemnation of what we used to be told on high authority was the model for all other countries, and that to which as they grew in wisdom they must approximate. And, by a curious piece of irony, this condemnation is pronounced by Mr. Chaplin, the incarnation of squirearchy. Even his eyes are at last, on the eve of a General Election, opened to the fact that the system is breaking up. The country is becoming thoroughly distasteful to the younger generation of labourers; the old stock, true descendants of the English villains, modern *ascripti glebæ*, are dying out; the men under thirty are betaking themselves to the towns and to occupations with an outlook less monotonous than that which must be theirs if they stick to their villages. All over the country what Mr. Chaplin calls "the growing distaste for labour on soil" is manifest. "Farming is becoming barely possible with us," says one well acquainted practically and in many capacities with the agriculture of the North of Scotland, "and the prospects are worse. The young generation which has been to Board Schools, and knows what is going on in the world, dislikes the work of a farm hand. The cotters, whose sons used to serve for a time as labourers before they succeeded to their fathers' holdings, were rooted out on many estates, and now many a landowner, with farms unlet by reason of the farmers' difficulty in getting labour, regrets the short-sighted policy of his father and grandfather." The movement is a singular repetition of history. We know that the break-up of villanage came about from the determination of the labourers, which no severity could defeat, no persuasion could overcome, to quit their homes and seek in the cities an escape from bondage. In the nineteenth century we witness a movement likely to have effects scarcely less than those of the movement in the fifteenth century. Will Mr. Chaplin be more successful than his predecessors in arresting a tendency which every year grows stronger? We doubt it. One of the chapters in Mr. Charles Booth's well-known work on London Pauperism makes it clear that the majority of countrymen do not come here from a vague, unintelligent desire for work; they come to do what they alone can do in towns, and what they are well paid for doing. And nothing will arrest the movement while the clear interests of the labourer and the gratification of his reasonable ambition are to be found here.

The substance of Mr. Chaplin's scheme is that County Councils may borrow a sum not exceeding such as would involve a charge on the rates of 1d.

in the pound, in order to purchase land to be re-sold in allotments of one to fifty acres. Roughly speaking, a sum of ten millions will be available for this purpose. One-fourth of the purchase-money is to be paid down at once; a fourth will be secured by a rent-charge, redeemable at will; and the residue will be paid off by yearly instalments, extending over fifty years. There will be restrictions upon sale, subletting, or subdividing, and only one dwelling-house may be erected on a holding. All this is open to a host of objections, some of which Mr. Chaplin admits. A County Council can have only an indifferent knowledge of the local circumstances of every parish; in administering such a measure it is certain sometimes to act blindly or wildly. Mr. Chaplin does not deny that a parochial authority would be more competent; indeed, any other is out of the question. A no less serious blot is the strong probability—we might say the certainty—that the measure, being voluntary, will not operate where it is most needed. Many landowners would gladly sell on easy terms to deserving labourers, and on their estates, where allotments are readily procurable, legislation is not very urgent. We want pressure chiefly in the case of landowners who believe, perhaps with Mr. Chaplin in his unregenerate days, that labourers should not be encouraged to look beyond the station in which they were born. Mr. Chaplin ensconces himself behind the resolution of a Select Committee. Is not the experience of the Allotment Acts, as to which it was soon found necessary to substitute compulsion for voluntary agreements, worth on this subject any amount of abstract resolutions? If Mr. Chaplin's argument is well founded—if the exodus from the country districts is going on to the extent which he describes, and with all the evil consequences which he deplores—there is as good a case for compulsory expropriation as was ever presented by any railway company coming to Parliament for compulsory powers. The Select Committee recommended a "fair trial" of the voluntary principle. Unfortunately, in a few years, while the trial is going on, this movement may be too strong to be arrested.

Mr. Chaplin is, in truth, only a half-hearted convert to his latest opinions. He still looks at the matter too much from the point of the squire and the farmer embarrassed by the novel spirit of the labourers. To him the constant migration of the rural population seems nothing but a mistake—"an evil to all parties whom it concerns." He cannot but believe that the country is the best place for the labourer, even if his wages be low and his life dull. This is a distorted view of the matter. The key to the situation is the fact that the labourers are, in present circumstances, acting as sensible men. The Bill ought not to be regarded as a bribe; it ought to be viewed as a measure of justice and expediency, a step towards the formation of a national land system, an attempt to give a chance to the one class which has hitherto had none. We hear much of the mutinous spirit of the labourers, of their new-born antipathy to squires and parsons, and we are told that in Norfolk, for example, many large houses are deserted by their owners, who no longer find country life to their taste. Good landlords as well as bad, we fear, suffer from this revolt. But Mr. Chaplin and his friends may assure themselves that the old order of things cannot return, and that even the chance of getting allotments or small holdings will not satisfy the labourers if they are not to be masters of their own affairs.

In the debate, Mr. Haldane raised one point which is well worth considering. The rates are to be pledged, the county is to run some risk, and yet it is not only to derive no benefit from the land, but is to lose control over it. It might be well to retain certain public rights over the holdings, if only to give the local authority a voice in regard to the disposal of the land and effectually prevent subletting or subdivision. But we deprecate strongly the imposing of a multiplicity of conditions—for example, as to building houses on the holdings. "Congested districts," whether in the country or towns, are evils. The risk of creating them in the former is small, and it is not worth while to load such a measure with complex conditions which may render it nugatory and make the Act of Parliament yeoman only a phantom.

THE RIGHT OF PUBLIC MEETING.

IF the Liberal Unionist party, whose views it is supposed especially to represent, could succeed in gagging the *Times*, or in effecting a revolutionary change in the management of that remarkable journal, they would have done the best piece of work in their own interests since the General Election of 1886. Because Mr. Morley introduced a deputation to the Home Secretary last Tuesday, and addressed Mr. Matthews in a few conciliatory words on the unfortunate disputes between the police and the public about the right of meeting in London, the *Times* scolds and raves at him like a nervous old woman afraid of burglars, and plainly hints that a Privy Councillor guilty of such atrocities is unfit to be a member of any Cabinet. It is difficult to understand what it hopes to gain by this peculiar conduct. We need hardly say that Mr. Matthews treated Mr. Morley and the influential deputation which accompanied him in a very different spirit. He frankly acknowledged that Mr. Morley had done a public service in approaching him, and although his assurances were not altogether satisfactory, his manner was courtesy itself. That Mr. Morley was the proper person to undertake the task only the blind fury of indiscriminate partisanship will deny. He is President of the London Liberal and Radical Union. He is almost the only leading personage among the Opposition who resides permanently in London. Even the wiseacres of Printing House Square can hardly suspect him of wishing to promote riots in the streets. He came to make peace, and though Mr. Matthews did not quite meet him half-way, we trust he will be found to have actually made it. Sir Charles Russell—who is also, we presume, disqualified for holding office under the Crown since he exposed the forgeries of Pigott, and the designs of Pigott's employers—took occasion to remark, with perfect truth, that if London had the same measure of Home Rule as other great towns, no difficulty would have arisen, and the people could have settled the matter through their representatives. Mr. Matthews made a rather smart retort. "Sir Charles Russell," he said, "prefers such a local government of the police as prevails at, let me say, Eastbourne to the government of the police which prevails in the metropolis." The militant authorities of that fashionable watering-place, whom Mr. Matthews, as appears from his answer to Mr. John Ellis in the House of Commons, has officially snubbed, will not be altogether pleased by this passing compliment. But if Mr. Matthews meant his gibe to have an argumentative value, it proves a great deal too much. It commits him to the theory that the control of the police shall not only be withheld from London, but shall be withdrawn from every other municipality in Great Britain. If any Minister were to propose such a measure, he would probably not remain in office a week. If Parliament were to sanction it, there would

be civil war. The trouble at Eastbourne is due to the fact that the Corporation have obtained by means of a local Act powers over the liberty of the subject which do not exist elsewhere.

The immediate cause of the application to Mr. Matthews was the recent series of conflicts with the police at the World's End, Chelsea. Ever since the month of August last there has been trouble at that spot on repeated Sundays, some fighting, many arrests, several trials, convictions, and sentencing of rioters. This is a deplorable state of things, and one which every sensible man must wish to improve. It has always been the practice to hold meetings at the World's End, and before last summer no attempt was made to interfere with them. They did not obstruct the traffic or annoy the inhabitants. That since the month of August the inhabitants have been annoyed and the traffic obstructed, we do not doubt. The evidence to that effect at the London Sessions was strong. But the question is whether the crowd and the uproar were not collected and provoked by the unwise fussiness of the police and the unnecessary intervention of Sir Edward Bradford, who was unfortunately not present on Tuesday. Mr. Matthews said, with great emphasis, more than once, that Socialists had as much right to express their opinions in the open air as he had himself, and that the political character of a meeting had nothing to do with its legality. We accept the statements of the Home Secretary implicitly so far as he himself is concerned. But that the police, on their part, have a strong prejudice against Socialists, to which they are constantly stimulated by the Tory press, there are many reasons for believing. It is certainly a curious thing that they never break up a political or religious assembly which is not Socialist or Salvationist. Mr. Matthews, speaking, of course, on instructions from Scotland Yard, declares that they did nothing at the World's End until one set of persons attacked another, and then only stepped in to preserve order. If that were the whole truth, there would be no ground of complaint. But many, indeed most, of Mr. Matthews's statements were contradicted by members of the deputation who had been at the World's End themselves, and Mr. Matthews would not have yielded so far as he did if he had been himself entirely contented with the version of the police. He has promised that, unless there is a renewal of disorder at the World's End, meetings there shall not be molested, and to this promise he will be held. There is, as Mr. Morley pointed out, a noticeable deficiency of halls for public speaking in London, and sometimes candidates for the County Council or the School Board are too poor to pay for their hire. It is, therefore, most important that the people should not be excluded from such open spaces as happen to be suitable and convenient. The right of public meeting may not be very strictly defined under our elastic constitution, though it is well enough understood; but the police cannot be justified in assaulting men who are not guilty of lawless violence.

A CRYING NEED.

AN episode in the debate on the Irish Local Government Bill last week, together with its sequel, will cause a good deal of amusement on the other side of the Atlantic. An American speaking to Englishmen almost always assumes their absolute ignorance of his own country. He has excellent reasons for doing so. English visitors to the States do not see much of political life: they never even hear of it at its best, and since the development of the Atlantic cables English readers learn less about it than ever, because the long letters which really did tell one something about politics have given place to scanty telegrams, mostly about finance. Still, since the appearance of Mr. Bryce's work, English knowledge of America might have been expected to advance. Unfortunately, to understand a book about political life it is necessary to know some elementary definitions and distinctions in politics and jurisprudence. And it is here that the general ignorance has been so astounding.

On Thursday night last week Mr. Chamberlain, whose American connections and his visit to Washington as Fisheries Commissioner ought to have kept him out of specially gross blunders, compared the proposed powers of judges over County Councils, in the ridiculous Bill of which Mr. Balfour is the unwilling sponsor, to those of judges of the State and Federal Supreme Courts in the United States. Those Courts, he said, have the power of disallowing Acts of the State Legislatures. Naturally Mr. Bryce exposed the statement—a process which ought not to have been necessary for any member of Parliament or politician. No decently educated American schoolboy—and, we think we may say, no intelligent girl in a New England High School—could have fallen into such a confusion between disallowing the Acts (*i.e.*, laws) passed by a legislative authority and sitting in judgment on the acts (*i.e.*, proceedings) of a part of that authority. The reader was almost inclined to think the confusion intentional—an elaborate joke at the expense of that party of which Mr. Chamberlain is at once the tail and the chief motor. Next day, however, it became only too clear that Mr. Chamberlain's conduct was not irony. As Dr. Johnson said of a certain definition in his Dictionary, it was "ignorance, pure ignorance." In Saturday's *Times* he went far beyond his original blunder. In a letter of ponderous jocosity he quoted the work of "Professor Bryce of Aberdeen" to confute the speech of "Mr. Bryce, M.P." His quotation ran thus: "Sometimes the plaintiff or defendant in an action [in a Supreme Court] may be the Federal Government or a State Government." His inference was that a State Legislature, or either House of it, might be a party to a suit. Of course this is a gross confusion of the Government in its executive aspect and that part of the Government in its legislative aspect which is termed the Legislature. Now this was surprising enough; but the attitude of part of the Press was more surprising still. The *Globe*—but then the intellectual products of the *Globe* consist exclusively of puns. But the *St. James's Gazette*, which is believed to have two authorities on constitutional law on its staff, hastened to endorse Mr. Chamberlain's letter, while Sir Henry Tyler hastened to cement the Unionist alliance in blundering by an illustration drawn from the painful experience of the Grand Trunk Railway, which illustrated, of course, not Mr. Chamberlain's view, but Mr. Bryce's. Mr. Swift MacNeill and Mr. Bryce speedily corrected these confusions. But the friendly tolerance expressed by the latter for the errors of a zealous but self-taught pupil was destined not to be repaid. On Wednesday morning Mr. Chamberlain not only repeated his former confusion, but he implied that imprisonment of local functionaries for contempt of court is parallel to the proposed dissolution of the Irish councils by a commission of judges. Mr. Bryce replied on Thursday; but Mr. Chamberlain is past reply. We await with amused attention the American criticisms on his letters.

Meanwhile it may be remarked that in several civilised countries this kind of confusion as to elementary political terms would be all but impossible.

A citizen of the United States has no excuse for not knowing the terms of elementary politics. The Federal Constitution is in his school-books. Mr. John Fiske's book on the "Civil Government of the United States" is the best of many manuals destined to make the subject intelligible, not only to the young voter, but to his little sister or his future wife. State Constitutions, too, are periodically revised, and their provisions discussed in detail in the Press. A Swiss child, at least in the Protestant Cantons, and, we believe, a French boy in an elementary school, has sound elementary teaching as to the outline of the Constitution of his country. The Swiss voter has his Dubs, and the Swiss politician his Blumer-Morel. Why should such blundering as Mr. Chamberlain's be possible in the parent land of modern free institutions? Our political system, with its unwritten Constitution, its legal fictions, its Constitutional understandings, its archaic text-books, is partly responsible. But why should not someone write a First Book on Political Science, for the use of schools and older students, stating the principles of English constitutional law, and giving some elementary definitions in politics and jurisprudence? Then we should not have an ex-Cabinet Minister hopelessly puzzled by the double meaning of the word "acts," or confusing an Executive—which does single actions in carrying a law into effect—with a Legislative, which issues general commands and is composed (in the States) of two legislative bodies and a governor. And it would probably be mentioned, by way of illustration, that in no country in the world have the Executive and the Legislative authorities been so carefully distinguished, or the legislative bodies made so subordinate a part of the latter authorities, as in the United States of America.

CHRONICLE OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

EARLY this week it was remarked by a Swiss paper that almost every nation in Europe was in some stage or other of a Parliamentary crisis. France is still without a Ministry. In Prussia the Elementary Schools Bill has not yet emerged from the Committee of the Landtag to which it has been referred; but the amazing speech of the Emperor on Wednesday indicates that it is to be forced through at all costs, and without substantial alteration. If so the Emperor may come off second-best in the struggle. In Austria the upsetting of the compromise between the Germans and Czechs as to the division of Bohemia into language-districts may very likely introduce further complications into the situation in the Reichsrath; in Hungary the opening of the session has been marked by incidents showing that the obstructionist minority are determined to fight hard; in Italy the disturbances at the Universities, and the alarming condition of the unemployed, have given rise to rumours of impending Ministerial changes, and there has been a meeting of Ministerialists to consider the political situation; in Servia there is a split in the Ministerial majority; in Greece the Premier has averted danger by throwing over the report of his own Committee appointed last summer to formulate charges against M. Tricoupis; in Spain the Protectionists and the Anarchists between them are very likely to cause a Parliamentary battle, and a great deal besides; in Norway the Radical Ministry are in conflict with the King on a point of Constitutional procedure. In our own House of Commons the proceedings of Thursday week have impressed foreign opinion in a manner very unfavourable to the Government. But the two salient facts on the Continent since our last issue are the Papal Encyclical and the Ministerial crisis in France.

Of these, the former explains the latter. M. de Freycinet last week knew the substance of what the Pope had said, and this was the reason of his indecision. The Encyclical itself is a very remarkable document. Its political philosophy is specially curious. Briefly, it insists on the duty of Catholics to submit to any existing Government—that is, not to attempt to change its form. Governments depend on the conditions of their time, but their legislation is human and fallible, and it is the duty of Catholics to combat all anti-Christian legislation. But they must, for the safety of the Church, preserve the Concordat. Peace between Church and State is urgently needed, and the work of pacification will be carried on by the bishops.

The document has, of course, been very variously interpreted. While the *Temps* lauds its sound political philosophy, recalling Montesquieu rather than Bossuet, the Catholics, as in duty bound, accept it (verbally) as completely in accord with the Declaration of the Cardinal-Archbishops, and emphasise the duty incumbent on Catholics of combating anti-Christian legislation. The Radicals, on the other hand, treat it as the militant Catholics would if they dared. The *Radical* summarises it pithily thus: "You must accept the Republic, and fight against it with all your might." The *Paris* treats it as "merely a strategic manœuvre." The *Justice*, M. Clémenceau's organ, regards it as written to the order of M. Ribot. But to the unbiassed reader it is a counter-manifesto to that of the Cardinals. While they lay more stress on the duty of attacking the Republican policy, the conspicuous feature of the Encyclical is its inculcation of the duty of submission. The new French Ministry is less combative than it might have been; but it can hardly be conciliatory.

M. Carnot has spent the week in consultation with many sorts of Republicans. On Saturday it is understood that he invited M. Ribot and M. de Freycinet tentatively to return to power, and that both eventually refused. On Monday he conferred with MM. Constans and Bourgeois, and took the advice of MM. Léon Say, Méline, Cavaignac, and some minor lights of the Radical party. On Tuesday he consulted other ex-Ministers and the Senators and deputies connected with the Press. It is said that M. Maret, of the *Radical*, advised him not to form a decidedly anti-Clerical Ministry. A dissolution was talked of, particularly by the *Temps*; but there was no definite issue on which to go to the country, and the Union Républicaine talked of inducing the Senate to refuse its sanction. A Ministry of Moderates was talked of, comprising MM. Casimir-Périer, Mezières, and Cavaignac. Eventually on Wednesday M. Rouvier, who had been ill for some days, undertook the formation of a Cabinet, which was to contain all the former Ministers save M. Fallières and M. Yves Guyot. M. Rouvier, however, aroused the hostility of the Radicals when General Boulanger was compelled to resign the Ministry of War; and M. Bourgeois, being invited to join the Cabinet, declined on the ground that it was not sufficiently anti-Clerical. For the moment, M. Rouvier's prospects are not encouraging. A Ministry under M. Bourgeois is spoken of, but nothing is settled as we go to press.

M. Laur has prosecuted M. Constans, but, as he had not obtained the requisite authorisation of the Senate, the case was dismissed on Wednesday, and the incident definitely closed.

M. Lamendin, the Socialist and Labour candidate, headed the poll for a deputy in the Bethune division of the Pas-de-Calais last Sunday. Doubtless he will be returned at the second ballot by Conservative votes, as M. Lafargue was at Lille.

In Belgium parties become more and more divided as to the details of the proposed Constitutional Revision. The Right are determined to limit them as much as possible, and have shown special hostility to the proposal (which does not emanate from the

Government) of making Flemish and Walloon official languages, and bringing in a conflict of nationalities like that in Bohemia. M. Nothomb, an ex-Minister, has resigned his membership of a Conservative association because he favours universal suffrage. The Socialist and Labour Congress at Brussels on Sunday determined on holding a great demonstration eight days before the General Election, on suspending all work on that day, and on ordering a general strike if the present Chamber refuses Revision, or if the new Parliament (or, rather, Constituent Assembly charged with the revision) indicates its intention to reject universal suffrage. The delegates from Antwerp and Ghent, however, declined to promise that the workmen of those towns would join in a general strike.

We noted last week the defeat of the German Government in the Reichstag on the question of the publicity of courts-martial. In one way the matter is unimportant; the Government need not, and will not, pay any attention to the vote. In another the result does not merit the absolute suppression it has received, in the *Times*, for instance; for the hostile voters included National Liberals and Bavarian Catholics. In Bavaria courts-martial are already public, and the cruelties outside Prussia are ascribed on good authority to imported Prussian sergeants. Is there to be an anti-Prussian coalition in the Reichstag? The eccentricities of a Prussian Emperor might very well bring it about.

That Emperor, at any rate, is quite determined to be independent of Parliamentary opposition. Grumblers had better leave Germany; he himself is responsible to God for his course, and will keep to it, independently of anyone. Such is the pith of his speech at the annual dinner of the Landtag of Brandenburg at Berlin on Wednesday. Another confidential order on the subject—this time in Bavaria—is published by the Socialist *Vorwärts*, and more are promised. It is said the new law against military espionage will contain clauses dealing with such publications.

An attempt to obtain the signature of the representative of the King of Hanover to a formal renunciation of his claims, in return for the release of the "Guelph Fund"—representing the Crown property of Hanover—from sequestration, has met with a refusal. Serious troubles with the unemployed are impending, especially in Brunswick and Dantzig.

In Austria an income-tax is to be proposed, differing in amount on salaries, trade profits, and interest on stocks and shares respectively. It is to be progressive, and a reduction is to be made to fathers of families for each child above two in number in a large town, or four in smaller places—a bit of anti-Malthusianism which reminds one of the disabilities of unmarried men in Imperial Rome.

In Hungary the opening of the session has been marked by a demand from some of the Extreme Radicals that the King Francis Joseph shall come to Parliament for its opening, instead of its waiting on him, as is now customary. The Speech from the Throne, delivered on Monday, contained a passage as to the observance of the compromise on which is based the dual monarchy, which was received by the same party with shouts of dissent.

M. Deliyannis, as we have said, asked the Greek Chamber on Monday to abandon the first count of the indictment against M. Tricoupis, and declined to discuss the second, as it referred to financial irregularities, and the financial situation is very grave—which he ascribes to foreign intrigue. His motion was adopted by 91 to 54. The Tobacco Monopoly Bill has been declared urgent by 76 to 28.

In Bulgaria the wives of M. Karaveloff and two other political prisoners have been tried on the charge of promoting foreign interference in Bulgaria—they having recently petitioned the representatives of foreign Powers at Sofia to urge the speedy trial of their husbands, who have been in prison since M. Beltcheff's murder last April. All three were acquitted on Tuesday.

MR. BALFOUR'S LOCAL GOVERNMENT BILL.

IT is a pity that Mr. Chamberlain is not a member of the Cabinet. If he were, we might hope to know the name of the person who proposed to put a County Council in the dock. The name deserves to be known and handed down to posterity as that of the mightiest master of unconscious humour whom our century has produced.

I want, however, to be fair and even to be serious. The Irish party were ready to give to any reasonable measure a full and careful consideration. It has been their principle for many years to take what they could get. Is there anything good in this Bill which would make it worth taking? Let me sum up the good points; they are few, though the Bill contains seventy-eight clauses, four schedules, and fifty-seven pages. The management of roads and bridges and a few other matters is to be transferred to local bodies of a more or less representative kind, and if they can manage the roads and bridges without ever borrowing a halfpenny, or ever being accused of corruption, or ever having their proposals traversed, those bodies will be able to get along without much outside control. The local bodies are to contain no aldermen, and (except at first) no *ex-officios*, whom Mr. Balfour rightly described as "irritating without being effectual."

This is the most favourable statement which could be made as to the provisions of the Bill, and even in that favourable form no unprejudiced man can say that it gives us anything worth fighting for. But the whole scheme bristles with impracticabilities. The grand juries are corrupt and unrepresentative, but it would be better to bear with them a little longer rather than see so useless and confused a proposal passed into law. In saying this I do not ground my contention solely or mainly on the natural objection—partly sentimental if you like—which every Irishman feels to the unnecessary and insulting "safeguards." I refer principally to the positive provisions which have escaped criticism in consequence of the absurdities of the negative checks.

The first essential of local government is a tolerable simplicity of areas, and a corresponding simplification of authorities. In every country local bodies are liable to become instruments of corruption, or to be so neglected as to produce monuments of incapacity. The only effectual check upon such bodies is the constant pressure of public opinion. And, to make such pressure effectual, the system must be simple enough to be easily understood by the electors, and the bodies not too numerous for honest local men to attend to them without neglecting their own business. It is for these reasons that every local government reformer objects to overlapping boundaries and conflicting authorities. We have in Ireland quite enough of such difficulties already. We have, leaving out the towns altogether, the county, with its subdivision the barony, and Unions (often overlapping the counties) with their electoral divisions (often overlapping the baronies). Many people hoped that the barony, which is an unequal and antiquated unit, varying from 1,600 to 310,000 acres, would be neglected altogether in the new scheme, that the electoral division for county purposes, and the unit for District Councils, would be a group of poor-law electoral divisions. But Mr. Balfour, instead of removing our difficulties, proposes to increase them. He proposes that the barony should be the area for district councils. But he admits the awkwardness of the barony when he proposes that the area for election to the County Council shall be a different one, carved out afresh. That is one new area, but, not content with this, Mr. Balfour proposes that for sanitary purposes the county shall be divided into an altogether new set of administrative areas, units, presumably, also for sanitary assessment, under the control of a committee appointed by the County

Council. So that if this precious scheme were to pass into law we should have—

1. The Poor Law Union.
2. The Poor Law Electoral division.
3. The Barony.
4. The County Council Electoral division.
5. The Rural Sanitary area.

As there are many areas, so there will be many authorities. The intelligent voter will have to watch the fifteen baronial councillors for his barony meeting at one town, the Poor Law representatives for his Poor Law division meeting perhaps at another, the fifteen county councillors for his division of the county meeting at a third town, the sanitary committee for his sanitary district meeting somewhere else, not to speak of the other local authorities: the governors of the lunatic asylum and of the county infirmary, the drainage boards, and perhaps the harbour boards, all of which will have the power to increase the burden on the occupier. The popular local man who had to attend on all these local boards would never find time for any business of his own. The honest man would too often give up the work in hopeless disgust. If Mr. Balfour had been designing a scheme for the purpose of encouraging corruption, he could not have been more successful.

Now let me very shortly sum up the various "checks and safeguards" against the "mere Irishry." The first is the franchise. The clause relating to the qualification of electors is so drawn that only those who pay their rates directly are enabled to vote. The theory of constructive rate-paying is entirely ousted. Indeed, the clause goes irrelevantly further, and provides that though the landlord may have contracted to pay half the rates, he shall not pay more than half the average amount of the rates for the five years before the passing of the Act. So that in a very essential matter the franchise is considerably narrower than in England. In the city of Belfast the franchise is the same as in English boroughs. If I rightly interpret the Bill, the effect of it will be to disfranchise many thousands of Belfast citizens. No doubt the action of the Labour party in municipal contests there has alarmed the Tory managers.

The second check is the cumulative vote. One county electoral division is to elect about fifteen county councillors, and the barony is to elect about ten baronial councillors at one time, on the English School Board system. This provision is not to extend to Belfast, where alone there is a considerable minority (the 70,000 Catholics) who have failed to find representation on the Borough Council. But the real objection to the proposal is not a party objection. The cumulative vote as it is proposed to be applied will be fatal to good government. Some of the Irish baronies are three times as large as Rutland. The voters cannot possibly know all the candidates for their suffrages. At the same time, the system requires, as Mr. Balfour says, great care in educating voters "to get them so to manage their votes as to get exactly the same value for them." In fact, the cumulative vote necessitates machine politics; and moreover, the members, being many of them alike representatives of a large area, will not pay the same attention to local wants as under the single-member system.

The third check is the refusal of any provision for the illiterate voter. This, it may be noted, is the more important where the voting is cumulative, and the ballot-paper contains, perhaps, twenty or thirty names. The English Government kept the older generation of Irishmen ignorant. It has driven the younger generation, who have been educated, to America. It now proposes to refuse to the old men who have stayed at home the right to vote on a matter which concerns roads and bridges. It is hardly necessary to say that Irishmen of all sections, knowing how bitter a struggle their fathers made for education in hedge-school and night-school, will oppose this insulting provision.

The fourth check is the provision that four landlords are to have places on the first County Council. This is probably designed to give the Tories a majority in some of the doubtful counties in Ulster.

The fifth, and in some ways the most objectionable, check is the control of the standing Joint Committee. The County Council will not be enabled to borrow a farthing without the consent, as in England, of the Local Government Board. What is more, the Irish County Council may not borrow to the extent of more than one-tenth the rateable value, an absurd limit, without obtaining a provisional order requiring the consent of Parliament. But this is not enough. A special body is to be formed, consisting of the High Sheriff, a landlord, and seven representatives of the Grand Jury, who must by the Bill be landlords, as well as seven representatives of the County Council. To this body, on which landlords must, by statute, have a majority, is given an absolute control over all capital expenditure of the County Council. The Scotch parallel referred to by Mr. Balfour is entirely inapplicable. In Scotland the rate is divided between owner and occupier; in Ireland (in most cases) it is not. Nor is the constitution of the similar body in Scotland really the same as that proposed to be created in Ireland.

The sixth check is that the Grand Jury is to retain its power of mulcting the county for so-called malicious injuries. Not content with leaving to the Grand Jury this antiquated power, Mr. Balfour removes the one existing safeguard—the inquiry at Presentment Sessions, which are partly representative. In fact this part of the Bill is a distinct step backwards.

The seventh check is the right of traverse. Any order of the County Council may be brought up for review by the High Court of Justice. Heretofore the traverse was heard before the Judge of Assize in the county concerned. Now the inquiry is to take place in Dublin or any venue ordered by the Court. This is another step backwards.

The eighth check is the power to the judges to order imperative rates, the ninth is the exaggerated safeguard given to existing officers, and the tenth is the power of dissolution by two judges, about which it is unnecessary to say anything further. Taking the ten checks all in all, since the ten plagues of Egypt there has been nothing like them.

If the House of Commons passes such a Bill, one might wish to empower two judges to dissolve even that honourable House. Of one thing they may at least be certain: they will not pass this Bill until they have used the closure times without number.

E. F. V. Knox.

FROM GREEN BENCHES.

THIS will be a Session of new revelations. Under its searching, and sometimes cruel, lights, there will be glimpses of personal character such as have been undreamt of before. On Tuesday night, for instance, there was a new view of Mr. Chamberlain. It is the misfortune of parliamentary leaders that many of their councils of war have to be held before the watchful eyes of a world of observers and enemies. This it was that lent such additional interest and disaster to Mr. Balfour's confusion and breakdown last week, when he allowed the debate to be closed which he desired to continue. Something of the same sort happened to Mr. Chamberlain on Tuesday night. A debate on Welsh Disestablishment, and still more a division upon it, had its inconveniences for a gentleman who still insists on his Liberalism; who had written the famous letter in which Lord Salisbury was recommended to Liberal Nonconformists as the shortest cut to Disestablishment; and who at the same time did not want to further hasten the approaching end of a dying Administration, or injure the prospects of a promising young son.

It was probably in the solution of this question that Mr. Chamberlain was engaged when he and a number of the gentlemen who are disrespectfully described as the "Birmingham gang," gathered close to the post-office in the lobby a short time before the division hour. The faithful Jesse was there; also Mr. Kenrick, most devoted of brothers-in-law, and several others of those who take their inspiration from the Prophet of Highbury. What these gentlemen said to each other, they themselves, of course, alone know; but this remarkable result followed. When the division was called, Mr. Chamberlain was to be found in the uncongenial company of Liberals in the Disestablishment lobby; while the faithful Jesse and Mr. Kenrick had gone home quietly to bed. Naturally this conduct was not the result of prearrangement; but if it were, it can easily be seen that a new and admirable line of tactics has been added to Parliamentary warfare. There is something peculiarly like the Mr. Chamberlain we are learning to know in the shallow trick of registering one's own vote and a few others on one side; in turning over the rest to the other side; and in making abstention instead of a straight vote one way or the other, the method for carrying out this policy.

The week has also brought its revelations with regard to the character of Mr. Balfour, and of the relations between him and the Tory rank and file. The letter in which Mr. Maclean—one of the really able men on the Tory side—described the attitude of Mr. Balfour and his uncle to their parliamentary followers, is fully deserving of all the attention it has received. These two gentlemen are shown to be utterly indifferent to the feelings of their supporters. They never consult them, they never consider them; and when a post comes to be vacant, it is in the ranks of their own relatives and clique, and not among the rising and energetic men of the party, they look for their recruits. It is the misfortune of both uncle and nephew to have detached minds—the detachment of intellectual *hauteur* in part and in part of men of the student habit of mind. This attitude of mind has its conveniences at times. It relieves from an enormous amount of the petty worries and the consultation of individuals, which is the *aliquid amari* in the cup of political greatness; but it also has its drawbacks, and the present Session of Parliament is going to reveal some of them.

It is scarcely credible, but it is true, that up to a short time ago Mr. Balfour had never heard, or, if he had heard, had forgotten, that at least a third of the existing members of the Tory party had resolved to retire from public life at the end of this Parliament. How important it was for him to have this information will be gathered from the mention of the single fact that this retiring section is the one that from time immemorial has broken down Governments in the last Session of a Parliament. It will be seen, then, that Mr. Balfour was about to begin his leadership of his party and of the House in blithesome ignorance of the great rock over which he had to steer his bark—the rock that lies plain, jagged, and frowning before the eyes of every man who has ever seriously studied the Parliamentary chart.

It is another revelation of Mr. Balfour's weaknesses that he should have delivered such a speech as that upon the Irish Local Government Bill. It is hard to say whether some of his utterances were the result of malice prepense, or the careless and repented consequences of an impulse to be smart at any cost. But a speech which does not take seriously the House of Commons and the measure it is intended to introduce to it, is a fatal mistake. Anybody who had ever given himself the trouble to understand the temper of the House of Commons could have told Mr. Balfour that bit of primordial information. But, again, his detachment from his followers and their ideas proved fatal, and Mr. Balfour made a speech the ill effects of which on his reputation it will take him many years to overcome. People are beginning to understand, too, why it is that a dashing Chief Secretary may be a very bad leader. To flout, and jibe, and jeer at the Irish members was just what the Tory press of London wanted: and was perfectly safe with seventy renegades in the opposite camp ready to stand by the Tory hosts. But a leader of the House has to get business done—to make the Parliamentary machine work smoothly and rapidly, and this can only be accomplished by his keeping an exceedingly civil tongue in his head. Personally, Mr. Balfour has the reputation—as, indeed, has Lord Salisbury—of being charming, and even fascinating; but in the House of Commons and on his legs, Mr. Balfour can manage to be as offensive—to rub people the wrong way—as frequently and disastrously as any man in the House, Mr. Chamberlain not excepted. A good deal of this is unintentional and unconscious, the result of that detachment of mind to which we have alluded; a good deal of it is the heritage of the office he held when it was his duty to fill Irish prisons and jeer at Irish Members. Like the *bourgeois gentilhomme*, Mr. Balfour often is surprised himself, doubtless, that he has been talking sneers. But the House of Commons is not a psychologist or an analytic novelist; and when Mr. Balfour speaks what appear to be exasperating taunts, it takes it for granted that this is what Mr. Balfour intended.

The results of all this were to be seen in the week which is just over, and will be revealed a good deal more clearly as time goes on. Divisions have been bad; the division on Welsh Disestablishment owed its slight improvement to the pressure of the Tory press, the shamefacedness of the previous narrow shaves, and the ingenious device of Mr. Chamberlain already described. But assuredly it is a portentous revelation of the humiliation to which the Tory leader has already attained that he should have to regard such a majority as a crowning mercy. It is noticeable that throughout the week business has not made anything like progress. The nights succeed each other, and grow in listlessness, and the doom of the count-out hangs, melancholy and menacing, over all private nights. But that is all; no business is done; the Government and Mr. Balfour get no "forrarder." Meantime, the printing offices grind out the vast new schemes of the dying Ministry with due regularity, and the Irish Local Government Bill, with all its multitudes of controversial clauses, has just been delivered to members. But it all comes to nothing. The engine won't move; the train stands still. A little more of this and people will actually begin to grow tired of genius and Mr. Balfour, and sigh for the vanished hand of poor, common-place, but business-like Mr. W. H. Smith.

THE ROMANCE OF FACT.

IT has long been plain that the imaginative quality of Fact is superior in range and staying-power to all the resources of Fiction. This has hitherto been disguised out of complaisance to the novelists. These practitioners have assumed that it is their exclusive business to present life to us in all the variety of the ideal, and in all the minuteness of what they call realism. We have submitted to the fallacy, chiefly on account of a natural preference for a quiet life; for unless your novelist is humoured, and unless the vault of heaven and the waters under the earth are accepted as the average measurement of his art, he is apt to become a trying person to live with. You must allow that what he does not see is worth nobody's vision, and that what is clear to him is the quintessence of truth and its now inseparable companion, ugliness; or else he will pursue you with obloquy and nicknames. Mr. Howells, for instance, has a pleasant little high-road of his own, on which there is the most blameless traffic and no dust. If you venture to suggest that something more exciting may be happening across

the trimly cut hedges, some tragedy in the woods beyond, where there is not even a footpath, you are told that on this high-road is the only life which deserves the observation of an intelligent man, and that in the woods you are not likely to see anybody save Valentine and Orson. This is the agreeable dictatorship which your novelist assumes over the entire realm of human existence. It is as if an ant on a tea-tray were to give himself the airs of a universal overseer. It may be safely affirmed that the sum of observation in all the novels that ever were written represents an infinitesimal factor in the great human equation. The science of astronomy, relatively to the infinite space through which it tries to peer its way, is like an infant crying for the light. In justice to the astronomer it must be admitted that he shows a modesty suitable to his attainments. Not so the novelist. His knowledge is no more extensive or precise than that of the student of the heavens. Yet he assumes the god, affects to nod, and seems to shake the spheres. When he takes his art very seriously indeed, he professes a horror of the abnormal. Let him have men about him that are fat, sleek-headed men, and such as sleep o' nights; but do not ask him to consider the ways of monsters, that is, of beings who have never come within his ken, and therefore must creep with the brand of the abnormal upon them into dishonoured graves. A writer who was famous once, but is now disdained by the *fin de siècle* critic, urged landscape painters to study Nature in her rarest moods, to watch for those wondrous shapes and tints which may be seldom, if ever, repeated in the infinite variety of natural charm. But the practice of your serious novelist is to beat a little track, often over the footsteps of others who are carefully ignored, to pursue this, looking neither to the right nor the left, and to measure with the milestones of his sagacious discernment the whole stupendous journey of man.

The mere story-teller who does not aspire to these heights of superiority may sometimes feel a pang of envy when he compares his inventive faculty with the treasures of romance which may be found any day in the newspapers. Fact does not bind itself by any rules of composition, nor does it study the pale probabilities which hover in a shadowy, uneasy way between the so-called normal and abnormal. When it has been decided by novelists and critics that men and women, in given circumstances, must behave in a particular way, and by no possible chance in any other, Fact, which has a touch of Puck's humour, and is apt to exclaim, "What fools these mortals be!" promptly shows us a civilised man or woman doing precisely what the law and the prophets have declared to be incredible. It is no answer to say that isolated freaks do not make a rule of life, for how does the realist, walking up and down his little street of routine, or trying to tie bales of human documents with the red tape of his small idiosyncrasy, know that the freak is not a flash from a vortex which he can never fathom? The more a man with any real vision sees of life, the more indefinite are its possibilities. But taking the story-teller's standpoint, how poor is his best plot, how timid his audacity, how marrowless his most original characters, when compared with the incidents and the people in the romance which the mighty loom of Fact is weaving every day! Here is an irreproachable commercial personage, no Wilhelm Meister with his head full of dreams, but a bank-manager who has to balance accounts. What happens to him? He is engaged to be married, but suddenly he is whisked away into space, and nought is heard of him by deserted bride or bewildered solicitors till an advertisement appears in the papers announcing that he has died on board a lady's yacht from the effects of an accident when leaving a railway carriage. If a man has had so perilous a mishap, why does he go yachting? Your realist would at once point out the absurdity of such a proceeding in a novel. The writer would be exposed to a raking fire of persiflage, and advised not to model himself on the fiction which is dear to housemaids. But is it possible that the gentleman in the yacht is now coursing the Spanish Main, a captive to a buccaneer in petticoats? Some mysterious body is said to have sworn that she would never let him wed another. Has she carried him off, or is he a willing prize to her nautical daring? Are they riding the billow in triumph, and enjoying the rich humour of the imaginary carriage accident? Or is he the dejected land-lubber lying down below with a grim Amazon of the ocean mounting guard over him? Mr. Clark Russell must be green with envy when he turns over these delightful possibilities in his mind, and thinks what splendid material they would have made if only he could have invented them. The chagrin of it is, if the abduction of a bank-manager should be used a year or two hence in a romance of the sea, the reviewer with a long memory will promptly spoil it by recalling Mr. Lidderdale's supposed adventure. Mrs. Humphry Ward would never have conceived Elise Delaunay in "David Grieve" without the aid of Marie Bashkirtseff, who was simply abducted from her own journal and planted in the novel. But though this piece of conveyance has taken in the *Spectator*, which fondly supposes that Elise is a "creation," the device cannot always be repeated with impunity. Even the most ingenious borrower from Fact must despair over the too frequent publicity of his plunder before he can utilise it; and the rare genius who transmutes the lessons of life in the laboratory of a consummate art may humbly confess in moments of depression that Fact is the unapproachable workman.

PEPPER AND KID GLOVES.

IF the newspaper reports may be trusted, Mr. Bernard Shaw and the undergraduates of Magdalen College, Oxford, must be congratulated on the two matches they have just played off against each other. In the first game Mr. Shaw's advantage as a grown-up man was more than counterbalanced by want of acquaintance with his opponents' play, and the home team, in consequence, won with some ease. At Woodstock, however, on the following Monday, the confidence of Mr. Shaw's backers was abundantly justified: he not only came up smiling, but was left smiling, in a pretty large company. So great a difference will a second or so of longitude make to men's notions of humour.

Mr. Shaw attempted to advocate Socialism in the rooms of a friend, a member of the beautiful college of Addison and Gibbon (as the morning papers called it when its President was married). Amid much that is tenebrous, this, at any rate, is certain of Socialism, that it will efface the familiar type of Magdalen undergraduate; and at Magdalen this type is (not unnaturally) cherished. No one can blame the youths of Magdalen for gathering to oppose Mr. Shaw; no one can deny them praise for choosing ridicule as their weapon. People have different views upon humour, especially upon such humour as comes from the Universities just now. Mr. Andrew Lang, for instance, can see little merit in the new Cambridge humour: he dislikes Mr. Barry Pain's "In a Canadian Canoe." Others may object to the new Oxford variety: but at least we may say this for the undergraduates of Magdalen, that they did not make it. They took what came to their hands. Its originator, as far as history reveals, is the present Warden of Merton, the weight and frequency of whose utterances could hardly fail to produce, by this time, a great effect of one kind or another in any provincial town. It will be remembered how the Warden of Merton, at a public dinner, compared a great Irishman with Jack the Ripper, and how, when called to account for his words before the Parnell Commission, he

explained that the comparison was intended for a jest. "My learned friend," said Mr. Reid, Q.C., on that occasion, "presents it to your lordships as a piece of academic banter." Clearly it was in the same spirit of banter that the young humorists of Magdalen "screwed up" Mr. Shaw and his friends, tickled their nostrils with asafetida and their lungs with red-hot pepper, appropriated their hats and poured water on the heads they had denuded.

Sweet are the uses of the 'Varsity: and Mr. Shaw appears to have had the good sense to accept them for what they are worth, at Oxford. He acknowledged his defeat, and set up the lists for the return match at Woodstock. The Warden of Merton once aspired to represent Woodstock in Parliament, and Woodstock refused to see *that* joke: so it might be obtuse to other examples of Brodrickian humour. This proved to be the case. The young men of Magdalen arrayed themselves as farmers, and came out from Oxford, elaborately got up for the part they meant to play. But at the meeting, unfortunately, they found themselves in a very small minority; and before a somewhat threatening display of buckets were, on the whole, amazingly quiet. We are told that their position was made a trifle more uneasy by Mr. Shaw, who, seeing through their agricultural disguise, persisted in treating them seriously and addressing them, in answer to their questions, as young men from the country, who could not be expected to know much of town politics. The audience took the jest, and roared at every variation which Mr. Shaw played upon it. So these young men returned sadly to the sheltered academy where their methods of humour are better understood. There is no moral, except that Woodstock is eight miles beyond Oxford.

THE SECOND EDITION OF "MODERN LOVE."*

A WILFUL man must not always have his way. Because Mr. Meredith refuses to send out review copies of his poems, shall he not, therefore, be reviewed? Nay, he is not thus to save himself from his friends. Is this particular perversity of his but a device to discover who his true friends are? Or is it a part of his literary conscience that he will not accept for his poems the reflected light of his fame as a novelist? If so, surely he is, as the Roman Church would say, "scrupulous," a habit of mind which that very human community does not encourage. Besides, he is in this unfair to the public which he thus implicitly condemns. It is not reasonable to blame a man for neglecting what he has been given no chance of appreciating. It is, indeed, a sort of literary Calvinism—an arbitrary predestination of many a possible sympathetic reader to the outer un-Meredithian darkness.

Mr. Meredith may say that the public has had its chance with "Modern Love." But what public? The public of thirty years ago! 1862 was the date of its first edition, 1892 is the date of the second. Think what an evolution in artistic taste has come about in those thirty years. In 1866 "Poems and Ballads" was a book for the common hangman, to-day it is a classic. If it has thus risen with the tide of a broader thought, why not "Modern Love"? Why should its author follow the example of his dramatis personæ, whose mistake, he tells us, was that—

> "They fed not on the advancing hours;
> Their hearts held cravings for the buried day.

The cases are parallel, because both books were condemned mainly on account of their theme. Sex was treated of too intimately in each, though, in fairness to Mr. Meredith, it must be stated, in a very different spirit. Now, we have outgrown much of this squeamishness, and come to see that it is not so much our theme that matters as the spirit in which we treat it. And, certainly, there can be little doubt that the influential literary organs of to-day would not allow such a question to stand in the way of their recognition of the splendid poetical qualities of "Modern Love." Mr. Meredith, however, has chosen not to seek their verdict: and such of them as would make some amends for their progenitors of 1862 must e'en go to them that sell and buy for themselves. To this one has no objection. It is rather a pleasant *nuance* in the life of a reviewer. It revives for him a joy, which he had known long since and lost a while, that of once more actually buying a book; and also of writing as a mere pleasure what in the ordinary course had been a pleasant duty. All one would suggest is that it is not fair play to the public.

Anyone who cares about "the cobwebs of criticism," to quote an ingenious phrase for dead reviews, may be interested to know how "Modern Love" was actually received in 1862. Four reviews are on record in Mr. Lane's bibliography—the *Critic*, May 17th, 1862; the *Spectator*, May 24th, 1862; the *Athenæum*, May 31st, 1862; *Westminster Review*, July, 1862. We are, perhaps, apt to think of Mr. Meredith's fame as being entirely a growth of the last year or two: and it is somewhat of a surprise to notice that, with the exception of the *Spectator*, the reviewers speak of Mr. Meredith respectfully, as of a man already recognised as belonging to the very front rank of modern letters. That the *Spectator* did not, and that it, moreover, condemned Mr. Meredith rather severely for his choice of subject, called forth a trenchant vindicatory letter from Mr. Swinburne, in which he raved—"ah, God! as he used to rave"—against the "nursery" ideal of art. "It is too much to expect," he wrote, "that all schools of poetry are to be for ever subordinate to the one just now so much in request with us, whose scope of sight is bounded by the nursery walls; that all muses are to bow down before her who babbles, with lips yet warm from their pristine pap, after the dangling delights of a child's coral; and jingles with flaccid fingers one knows not whether a jester's or a baby's bells."

'Fore Heaven! as fine a burst of the true Swinburnese as ever was penned. But what about a roundel beginning:—

> "A baby's feet, like sea-shells pink,
> Might tempt, should heaven see meet,
> An angel's lips to kiss, we think,
> A baby's feet."

("A Century of Roundels," 1883.) Ah, that "whirligig"!

Mr. Swinburne, at the same time, paid his own tribute of splendid praise to the "subtle strength," the "depth of delicate power," the "passionate and various beauty" of the poem.

But why did he not also write to the *Athenæum*? For though, indeed, it was more respectful to Mr. Meredith, its attitude to the poem was much that of the *Spectator's*. The reviewer very properly complained of the obscurity of the story. "We are not sure," he went on, "that, after great labour, we have arrived at Mr. Meredith's drift: but we are quite sure that, if we have, we do not care for it. We have already intimated that 'Modern Love' contains passages of true beauty and feeling, but they are like the casual glimpses of a fair landscape in some noxious clime where the mists only break to gather again more densely. Besides, the best gifts of expression would be wasted on a theme so morbid as the present. It is true that poetic genius has often revealed to us the diseases of our nature, but they have been only a portion of the exhibition. The causes which produced them and the results in which they were expiated or subdued have also been given. The bane has shown the virtue of the antidote."

The best retort to such a criticism as this—this demand for the obvious and the didactic—is to quote the last poem of the series:—

> "Thus piteously Love closed what he begat:
> The union of this ever-diverse pair!
> These two were rapid falcons in a snare,
> Condemned to do the flitting of the bat.

* "Modern Love: a Reprint." By George Meredith. London: Macmillan & Co.

Lovers beneath the singing sky of May,
They wandered once; clear as the dew on flowers;
But they fed not on the advancing hours;
Their hearts held cravings for the buried day.
Then each applied to each that fatal knife,
Deep questioning, which probes to endless dole.
Ah, what a dusty answer gets the soul
When hot for certainties in this our life;
In tragic hints here see what evermore
Moves dark as yonder midnight ocean's force,
Thundering like ramping hosts of warrior horse,
To throw that faint thin line upon the shore!"

Surely the man who having read this poem—not singly, mind, but as the culmination of a series equally lofty in inspiration—is left with a nasty taste of morbidity and disease should blame his own palate. Certainly he must be dead to all the finer intimations of poetry. The very vigour of the style is enough. Unhealthy men never get that atmosphere into their lines; and if ever "the pity of it" was finely struck in an epilogue it is struck here. One passes from these lines as we return from a walk by the sea on a starry, stormy night.

About the obscurity of the story, the reviewer was right, though it apparently meant more to him than it will to the real *illuminati* of poetry. In some respects its reticence is commendable. Who wants to hear the divorce-court details of the story? We ask the spiritual situations, and these we get in fifty "tragic hints," otherwise, fifty sixteen-line poems, as like sonnets as is no matter—though we should have all the young misses down on us in a moment if we dared to speak of them as such. At the same time Mr. Swinburne so speaks of them—and poor Goldsmith's quaint idea of a sonnet, one was reminded the other day, was a couple of ballad-quatrains, enclosing some paste diamond to "Myra."

The Westminster Review was friendly but brief—for it had to hurry on to give Dr. Hill Burton's "Book-Hunter" three pages to Mr. Meredith's half a page.

The Critic, reviewing the poem in a batch including David Gray's "Luggie," was also kind, though quaint. Like the squire in Mr. Dobson's poem, "he praised the thing he understood"—the "Poems of the English Road-side," which accompanied "Modern Love," in the first edition, and included the famous "Juggling Jerry." These Mr. Meredith has teased us by omitting in the new edition. It is enough to turn a man pirate, and justify him too. To look for "Juggling Jerry" and find "The Sage Enamoured and the Honest Lady"! one of those low thickset hedges of prickly thorn which Mr. Meredith has lately delighted to plant about his "Apollo's Garden." However, "Modern Love" remains, and with one or two trifling emendations, not always to the good, remains as in 1862. Some have prophesied, and the late Mr. Browning was amongst them, that "Modern Love" is built to outlive all Mr. Meredith has done. Outlive "Feverel"! Outlive "The Egoist"!! Well, of course, I cannot say, but verse has a way of holding together longer than prose.

BOILEAU AS NATURALIST.

THAT the traditional view of Boileau as a hide-bound pedant, as a pedagogue with a perruque, drawing up rules and enforcing them with a ruler, assigning marks (chiefly bad) to those naughty little schoolboys his contemporaries, is hardly likely to be the right view is evident to anyone who considers the source from which it comes. It is one of the literary legacies of 1830, bequeathed to us by the Romanticists, who were not exactly the people to see the great legislator of Classicism either steadily or whole. Gautier, for instance, declared him a loathly thing; but then Gautier (we have it on the veracious authority of M. de Goncourt's Diary) once called Molière—this was after dinner, and possibly he had been looking upon the wine when it was red—a *cochon*. And another of the Romanticists is reported (by Sainte-Beuve) to have said: "There are two sorts of verses in Boileau, one written by a clever third-form boy, the other by a clever undergraduate." It is time that saner notions of Nick Boileau should prevail; and after M. Gustave Lanson's little monograph on "Boileau," the latest volume of the "Grands Écrivains Français" series (Paris: Hachette), it is not unlikely that they will.

The great point which M. Lanson makes is that Boileau was a naturalist; that, in fact, he has more in common with M. Zola and his friends than meets the eye. This will sound to many persons, whose notions of M. Zola are derived from Holywell Street mistranslations, and of Boileau from their having once had to write out a hundred lines of "Le Lutrin" for pulling Jones Minor's hair in afternoon school, as a flippant paradox, but M. Lanson establishes it as a sober truth. A little verbal criticism and the trick is done. You take the word "raison." This word is as common in Boileau as (Sancho would say) bachelors in Salamanca. Matthew Arnold himself did not more persistently conjure all and sundry to be "sweetly reasonable." He was all for "la raison," or its equivalent "le bon sens."

"Que toujours le *bon sens* s'accorde avec la rime . . .
Au joug de la *raison* sans peine elle fléchit . . .
Tout doit tendre au *bon sens* . . .
La *raison* pour marcher n'a souvent qu'une voie."

Now by reason, says M. Lanson, Boileau did not mean what we mean. It was not the positive, calculating, prosaic reason of, say, the typical *bourgeois* of Scribe or of M. Poirier. Nor was it the analytical reason, the *ratio ratiocinans* of a Voltaire or a Condillac. It was the reason known to the current philosophy of Boileau's day: "La raison cartésienne, dominatrice et directrice de l'âme humaine, dont elle règle toutes les facultés sans en empêcher aucune; c'est celle qui, par essence, distingue le vrai du faux." In short, it was just "sweet reasonableness." Translate this into terms of æsthetics, and reason becomes beauty:—

"Aimez donc la raison; que toujours vos écrits
Empruntent d'elle seule et leur lustre et leur prix."

But beauty is truth:—

"Rien n'est beau que le vrai. . . ."

And truth is nature:—

"La nature est vraie. . . ."

Reason, truth, and nature, then, were for Boileau all one, and the conclusion is that his theory of Classicism in poetry, generally misrepresented as based on a horror of the natural, is essentially and frankly a naturalistic theory. Hence we find Boileau, when he says, "Mais la nature est vraie, et d'abord on la sent," cheek-by-jowl with M. Zola declaring, "La vérité a un son auquel j'estime qu'on ne saurait se tromper. On dira qu'il faudra des oreilles délicates. Il faut des oreilles justes, voilà tout." And so Boileau's denunciation of the unbridled imagination, the exaggeration of nature, in the heroic of Corneille, and the burlesque-heroic of Scarron, has its counterpart in M. Zola's denunciation of the unbridled imagination, the exaggeration of nature, in Balzac.

What is more, Boileau was a naturalist, M. Lanson points out, in practice quite as much as in theory. His minor poems abound in those vulgar and even repulsive details which are popularly supposed to be the "note" of modern realism: as in this picture from "Le Repas Ridicule":—

"Où les doigts des laquais dans la crasse tracés
Témoignaient par écrit qu'on les avait rincés";

or in this of the seventeenth-century fine lady:—

"Qui souvent d'un repas sortant toute enfumée,
Fait même à ses amants, trop faibles d'estomac,
Redouter ses baisers pleins d'ail et de tabac."

which is right Zola.

Was this Boileau, the realist, the enemy of the imagination and all its pomps and works, a poet?

M. Lanson is at such pains to prove that he was that one feels bound to decide against him. Your true poet ought, like the axioms of Euclid, to "need no demonstration." And even M. Lanson admits that Boileau's poetry was mostly latent; it did not "come out." What did "come out" was his critical faculty. Your true poet is never a true critic, his theory can never be anything else than a more or less veiled apology for his own practice. But Boileau escapes from the tyranny of his temperament: he is able to explain what he is unable to do: he can conceive an art superior to his own: his theory infinitely transcends his practice. And not the least curious fact about this critic, who for two centuries has been invoked as the patron saint of all the rules, conventions and orthodoxies, is that he was of the "new criticism" of his day, "going for" established reputations with cheery vigour, and so getting himself called by some of the very names ("jeune dogue," for instance) which have been applied to another "new criticism." When one hears of his being told that he did nothing "que les mouches ne fassent sur les glaces les plus nettes," one can almost fancy oneself reading some of the complimentary references of the *Daily Telegraph* to the Ibsenites.

Of Boileau the man, M. Lanson has little to say, because there is little to be said. His was a long, uneventful, entirely literary life. He was never even crossed in love, for he never fell into it. Only once did he make an excursion into the active world. This was when, by Royal command, he followed, in company with Racine, a campaign of the army in Flanders, to get materials on the spot for a history which the pair were to write in collaboration. The vision of the two poets as "our special correspondents at the seat of war" is extremely diverting. Pradon described them, sword on hip, importuning generals, laughed at by the soldiery, gravely noting down military slang in their pocket-books, and putting on their spectacles to reconnoitre an invisible enemy; while Mme. de Sévigné wrote of "ces deux poètes historiens, suivant la cour, plus ébaubis que vous ne le sauriez penser, à pied, à cheval, dans la boue jusqu'aux oreilles." One campaign was quite enough for Boileau, who returned to Paris, preferring to "bid the rest keep fighting" in elegant verse. He did not even stay to meet Uncle Toby at the siege of Namur.

SPIELMANN AND VALHALLA.

THE editor of THE SPEAKER has answered the correspondent signing "Respice Finem" for me. I can add nothing to my editor's words; I can only repeat them. "Our correspondent has failed to distinguish between 'G. M.'s' estimate of Mr. Tate as an art-patron and that gentleman's character as a man." With Mr. Tate's character as a man, with the general worthiness of his life, I have nothing to do. I am merely concerned with the proposed housing of the Tate collection in the new wing of the National Gallery. Attempt has been made to disguise and obscure the facts, but they remain as they were. Mr. Tate's collection of modern pictures having been refused by the director and the trustees of the National Gallery, that gentleman has had recourse to Mr. Spielmann, and a newspaper controversy has been "got up" with a view to bringing pressure to bear on the director and trustees, and compelling them to accept a large number of bad pictures which, in their opinion, would permanently and seriously lower the level of excellence hitherto held to be essential in our National Gallery. I state the facts bluntly, but I state them truthfully; and it will not do to plead the exceeding goodness of Mr. Tate's life, the purity of his intentions, and the depth of his exchequer. Such matters are beside the question. Mr. Tate has been told by the director and the trustees that his pictures are not worthy of the nation's acceptance, and he has learnt that this is so through other sources. The *Pall Mall Gazette*—the newspaper in which Mr. Spielmann published his letter—on the 11th or 12th of the present month admitted that in the opinion of experts there were very few, if there were any, pictures in the Tate collection worthy of the nation's acceptance. If further evidence be wanting, if Mr. Tate still believes in the value of his collection, I can only suggest that he shall consult the Academicians whose pictures he has purchased. If the matter is put to their ballot, it will be found that there are not three pictures that collectively they would consent to hang in the National Gallery. Ask Mr. Fildes if he thinks a picture by Mr. Long would look well in the National Gallery, or Mr. Hook if he thinks one by Mr. Faed should be added to our collection. I will even go a step further. Ask Mr. Orchardson if he would care to see his "Rift within the Lute" in the National Gallery. Pictures by Mr. Orchardson will probably in course of time find their way into the National Gallery; but "A Rift in the Lute" is not among them, and no one knows this better than Mr. Orchardson.

It has been said that I wrote insultingly and grossly concerning Mr. Tate's "princely gift" to his countrymen, and that I built up my "argument by perversion and misrepresentation." Mr. Tate's proposal involved a principle which, in the opinion of artistic London, could not fail to bring about the pollution and the degradation of one of the most perfect collections of pictures in the world. I therefore wrote without consideration of anyone's susceptibilities, having nothing in mind but an exact and vivid interpretation of the truth. We want to save our National Gallery from his donation—that is all; and if he is an unselfish, noble-hearted man, unsoiled with personal vanity, he will withdraw his offer of the present collection, and will bow to the opinion of artistic London. But stay, another road leads to immortality, and Mr. Tate may take it if he will. Let him sell his collection at Christie's—it will fetch a larger sum to-day than it will ever fetch again—and let him invest the money in pictures by men that Time has judged to be masters; and these let him present to the nation, and with all my poor strength will I applaud him.

That I should have seen the humour of Mr. Tate's barrow of mock immortals makes Mr. Spielmann very wrath, and he accuses me of covering Mr. Tate with ridicule. Is it my fault if Mr. Tate employed Mr. Spielmann to plead his case? Is it my fault that Mr. Spielmann does it so absurdly that he sets all the world laughing? Here is a specimen of Mr. Spielmann's advocacy. I quote from a weekly contemporary on which Mr. Spielmann once held a responsible position, and to which he apparently still continues to contribute. The entire paragraph from which I gather one precious sentence is replete with that special quality which I shall call Spielmann humour:—"All the while Mr. Tate has maintained a dignified silence. He has sent an ultimatum to Mr. Goschen, and unmoved, it is said, by temperate suggestion, and indifferent, it is hoped, to abuse and misrepresentation, however virulent, he quietly awaits the course of events." Now the irony of the picture that Mr. Spielmann has sketched of Mr. Tate sitting in a Buddha-like calm, awaiting the result of his ultimatum to Goschen, cannot be surpassed. I spoke of trundling a barrow of mock immortals; but the Buddha, with a little crowd of mock immortals hanging round his pacific knees, their eyes turned to the Valhalla whose walls are already rising above the banks of the Thames, is infinitely more droll.

As we proceed into his letter, Mr. Spielmann's humour becomes more subtle. He says that Mr. Tate's pictures were refused by the National Gallery authorities merely on account of want of space. The editor of an English magazine affecting not to know the meaning of the phrase, "We regret that want of space," is equal to Jeames pretending that

he does not know the meaning of the phrase "not at home." Has Mr. Spielmann never returned a tiresome manuscript with regrets that "want of space," etc.? And before Mr. Spielmann was editor did he never have an article returned to him? I will yield to no man in my admiration of the Spielmann style. The lightness and at the same time the strength of touch, the unmistakable rarity of epithet, are my daily, certainly my weekly, delight; and although I do not doubt that Mr. Spielmann possessed these gifts of style from his birth, I may be perhaps allowed to suggest that they did not always exist in their present perfection. So when the Spielmann style was in the bud, was no brutal editor guilty of the sin of returning a manuscript to Mr. Spielmann with regrets that "want of space," etc.? Passing to a second point, Mr. Spielmann says: "It is not true that Mr. Tate proposes to present his pictures *en bloc*, but only such of the best as an independent committee may judge worthy of acceptance." Will Mr. Spielmann kindly give his authority for this statement? Passing to a third point, Mr. Spielmann says it is manifestly not true that Mr. Agnew, supposing he carried out his intention and endowed the new wing of the National Gallery (the new wing to be devoted to contemporary painting), would therefore acquire any share in the management. Why manifestly? To many of us it will seem impossible to endow an institution with ten thousand pounds without acquiring power—direct or indirect—in the management of that institution. Mr. Spielmann says that he did not reveal this fact—that Mr. Agnew is anxious to endow the National Gallery. Still, I would believe that he inspired the idea; no one but Mr. Spielmann could have thought of anything so funny. The idea of a picture-dealer investing ten thousand pounds in our National Gallery is worthy of Mr. Gilbert in his most whimsical vein. Passing to a fourth point, Mr. Spielmann says he does not advocate a British Luxembourg. "On the contrary," he says, "I have sought only to direct attention to the far more pressing necessity and the greater desirableness of a British Louvre." I have already pointed out with so many words of praise the many excellences of Mr. Spielmann's style that perhaps I may be here permitted some slight criticism. Mr. Spielmann is apt to neglect the thought in his elaborateness of phrase. I confess that his meaning sometimes escapes me, and I never was more puzzled than I am now. Whatever does he mean? Works by living painters are not admitted into the Louvre. Then what would become of the Tate collection, not one single picture of which could enter the institution desired by Mr. Spielmann? Stay, those by the late Edwin Long could. So Mr. Spielmann's Valhalla or British Louvre resolves itself into a building with "Diana or Christ?" on one wall, and—— Well, I have forgotten the titles, but no doubt Mr. Spielmann remembers them.

In the last paragraph of his letter Mr. Spielmann declares that beyond contradicting my mis-statements it is impossible to enter into discussion with me. Mr. Spielmann has certainly contradicted me—he might do that if I said the world was round—but it would be more to the point if he had proved that I was wrong in any important point; and as for continuing the discussion, that, quite independent of my "Billingsgate," is impossible until he explains how a British Louvre could include a collection of pictures by living artists.

G. M.

THE DRAMA.

"Lady Windermere's Fan."

"IT is well that a change should from time to time be made in old customs," said M. Renan the other day, "as life would otherwise be too monotonous." This profound truth explains some things, and excuses others. It explains M. Renan. It excuses Mr. Oscar Wilde. Here is a gentleman who devotes brilliant talents, a splendid audacity, an agreeable charlatanry and a hundred-Barnum-power of advertisement, to making a change in old customs and preventing life from being monotonous. He does this in innumerable ways—by his writings, his talk, his person, his clothes, and everything that is his. He has aimed at doing it in his play, *Lady Windermere's Fan*, and has been, to my mind, entirely successful. It is by no means a good play: its plot is always thin, often stale; indeed, it is full of faults—oh! dear, yes! glaring faults—faults that would leap to the eyes of the man in the street or of the old applewoman round the corner. Yet, again, it *is* a good play, for it carries you along from start to finish without boring you for a single moment. While it is a-playing, it convinces you, in spite of yourself, that life is not monotonous. If we have had more sparkling dialogue on the stage in the present generation, I have not heard it. It presents at least one fresh and piquant study of character. And it breaks long-established laws of the theatre—makes, as M. Renan would say, a change in old customs, with light-hearted indifference. If these qualities do not constitute a good play, they constitute a very diverting one. The man or woman who does not chuckle with delight at the good things which abound in *Lady Windermere's Fan* should consult a physician at once: delay would be dangerous.

For the staleness of the incidents one has only to refer to half a dozen familiar French plays. As to the stage laws which are broken, they are two: one invented by Sarcey, the other by Diderot and promulgated by Lessing, while—but perhaps it will be better to tell the story and make my comments as I go along. Lady Windermere is a guileless young bride who, like M. Dumas' Françillon, believes in an equal law of fidelity for both husband and wife. She has perfect confidence in her husband, but if ever that confidence is betrayed it is pretty clear that she will act on Françillon's principle of reprisals—an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. The time comes when she has reason to suspect that her confidence is betrayed. An unprincipled man of the world—unprincipled, for he divides mankind not into the good and the bad, but "the charming and the tedious," and "can resist everything, except temptation"—with designs of his own upon Lady Windermere, hints to her—only hints, for he holds that "to be intelligible is to be found out"—that her husband is too intimate with a certain Mrs. Erlynne. Who is Mrs. Erlynne? She is a *demi-mondaine* in the original Dumasian sense of that much-abused term: or, as a certain gossiping Duchess puts it, one of those people "who form the basis of other people's marriages." The suspicions thus aroused are confirmed when the wife tears open her husband's bank-book: the creature is in his pay! More than that, he insists upon her being admitted as a guest to one of his wife's receptions. "If she comes, I will strike her in the face with my fan," says the indignant wife. "How hard you good women are!" "How weak you wicked men are!" "If she only knew!" sighs Lord Windermere.

She does not know; if she did, there would be no piece. But are we, we spectators, not to know? Orthodox theatrical practice says, yes; Mr. Wilde, ever bent on "making a change in old customs," says, no. Diderot, to be sure (the curious will find the passage in the preface to his *Père de Famille*), warned the dramatist against "surprises," and his warning has since been petrified into a hard-and-fast law. But this, really, is to misunderstand Diderot himself, who, in the very same passage, goes on to say:—

> O faiseurs de règles générales, que vous ne connaissez guère l'art, et que vous avez peu de ce génie qui a produit les modèles sur lesquels vous avez établi ces règles, qu'il est le maître d'enfreindre quand il lui plaît!

Does Mr. Oscar Wilde prove himself such a *maître* in this play? I think he does. It is all a question

of pleasure, of interest. If he gives us more pleasure by teasing our curiosity about Mrs. Erlynne than by satisfying it, then is he entirely justified. We do not know who Mrs. Erlynne is until the very end of the play. If we were told at the outset, I, for one, should not view her conduct and Lord Windermere's in forcing her upon his wife with half the interest which these things afford me while still in the dark. (I put this as a personal view, because the general opinion is very possibly against me. So at least Mr. Wilde would seem to think, for it appears that, since the first night, the story has been so modified that the audience are no longer kept in the dark. But, of course, I shall continue to discuss the only version of the play which I have seen.)

Well, then, Mrs. Erlynne is duly ushered into Lady Windermere's drawing-room, and we have the spectacle of an adventuress bearing herself bravely, captivating all the men, and outshining all the women, in the presence of a hostile hostess. This, of course, is Act I. of Dumas' *L'Étrangère* over again: Mrs. Erlynne is Mrs. Clarkson, and Lady Windermere is the Duchesse de Septmonts. But yet there is a difference—a difference which again shows Mr. Wilde "making a change in old customs." Dumas introduces this incident for the sake of a *scène-à-faire*, beloved of Sarcey. For a corresponding *scène-à-faire* in Mr. Wilde's play, we should have to see the hostess keeping her word about the fan, and administering a slap in the face to her guest. We have no such scene. Instead of imitating the Duchesse de Septmonts, when she breaks the cup out of which Mrs. Clarkson has drunk, Lady Windermere elects again to imitate Françillon: she will leave her husband's roof—naturally for that of Lord Darlington.

Thither she is followed by Mrs. Erlynne, who alone knows of her flight, and is determined to save her. Why? Because she feels that the very same tragedy which once happened to herself is now in danger of happening to this other woman—see (and the resemblance will seem more complete to you when you know all Mrs. Erlynne's secret) M. Jules Lemaître's *Révoltée*. She appeals, first, to the young wife—in vain; then to the young mother—and prevails. But it is too late. The women have only just time to hide before Lord Darlington, Lord Windermere, and a party of men enter the room. Here, once more, Mr. Wilde poses as the law-breaker. He calmly suspends his action, while the men sit down to a long talk. But you do not notice its length, for it is a perpetual coruscation of epigrams. All the men talk like Mr. Oscar Wilde. Everything is discussed paradoxically, from the connection between London fogs and seriousness—"whether London fogs produce the serious people or serious people the London fogs"—to the connection between feminine frivolity and feminine charms—"nothing is so unbecoming to a woman as a Nonconformist conscience"; from cynicism—"the cynic is the man who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing"—to married womanhood—"nothing is so glorious in life as the devotion of a married woman; it is a subject about which no married man knows anything." Then, just before we are in danger of getting a little tired of epigrams, just *before*—for did I not say that Mr. Wilde never lets you be bored?—it is discovered that a lady is in hiding. Here is her fan—"my wife's!" says Lord Windermere, much as the Prince de Bouillon recognises his wife's bracelet in *Adrienne Lecouvreur*. But we have had a much more recent parallel than that in Mr. Haddon Chambers's *Idler*, produced at this very theatre. In fact, henceforward, if any stage-heroine carries a fan, I shall know at once what the plot is going to be. But the fan does not betray Lady Windermere, for it is Mrs. Erlynne who comes forward to claim it, while the wife glides away, unperceived.

Now you are nearing the end of the play, you are to be told Mrs. Erlynne's secret, and I will hark back, if you please, to my mention of M. Lemaître's *Révoltée*. In that play a divorced woman, believed by her daughter to be dead, intervenes to save the girl from the very fate which she herself suffered. That is the case here: Mrs. Erlynne is Lady Windermere's mother. But M. Lemaître gets a *scène-à-faire* out of this: the mother reveals herself to her daughter. That is not Mr. Wilde's way. He lets the truth about Mrs. Erlynne slip out, quite casually, in a conversation between the lady and Lord Windermere, and so we now know how it is she has been able to blackmail him; but she never tells her child. She has had enough of virtuous self-sacrifice and of playing at motherhood. "How could I pass for a woman of twenty-nine or thirty—twenty-nine when there are pink shades, thirty when there are not—with a grown-up daughter?" And, thank goodness, she doesn't repent—stage repentances are so tedious! No, she retires laughing from the scene, a true *demi-mondaine* to the last; and with the reconciliation of husband and wife the play ends.

As I began by saying, the faults of this piece are glaring enough. Mrs. Erlynne has really no better reason for forcing her way into her daughter's drawing-room than Mr. Wilde's recollection of that scene in *L'Étrangère*. Lord Windermere is an impossibly foolish person for risking his whole domestic happiness rather than let his wife know her mother was a divorced woman. But then, if Mrs. Erlynne did not force her way in, if Lord Windermere were not an impossibly foolish person, there would be no play, and Mr. Oscar Wilde would not have broken the monotony of life so gallantly as he has. It is no use telling me of the constructive faults, the flimsy plot, the unreasonable conduct of the characters. My answer is, "I know all that; but the great thing is, that the play never bores me; and when a dramatist gives me such a perpetual flow of brilliant talk as Mr. Wilde gives, I am willing to forgive him all the sins in the dramatic Decalogue, and the rest." Someone this week has compared the talk with Sheridan's; but that is, perhaps, a little "too steep." The style of the play suggests to me rather the Lyttonian, the Disraelian, the style of the Age of the Dandies. And a very delightful style, too! Meretricious, you say? Oh, yes! undeniably meretricious. But meretricious wit is better than the usual jog-trot, philistine stupidity of the stage. Anything for a change. "It is well that a change should from time to time be made in old customs, or life would otherwise be too monotonous."

The acting is, for the most part, equal to the occasion. Miss Marion Terry renders the complex, mundane, demi-mundane, yet very human character, of the mother—this is the one fresh character I spoke of—with perfect success. That this lady, who generally plays parts like that of the guileless Lady Windermere, should be able to pass so easily to an opposite type shows that her talent is as various as it has always been charming. I declare she now rivals her sister: she is one of the most valuable actresses the comedy stage can boast. Miss Lily Hanbury is a little too Juno-like, physically and mentally, for the part of the young wife: we want an English Reichenberg to play that. Nor is Mr. Nutcombe Gould quite impassioned enough for Lord Darlington; fancy Don Juan played by the Statue of the Commander! Mr. Alexander is, however, excellent in the rather ungrateful part of the husband; and the men who act as the dummies for Mr. Wilde's ventriloquial epigrams, are capitally played by Mr. H. H. Vincent, Mr. Vane Tempest, and Mr. Ben Webster. Of Mr. Oscar Wilde's coming forward at the end, cigarette in hand, to praise his players like a preface of Victor Hugo, and to commend his own play, "of which I am sure, ladies and gentlemen, you estimate the merits almost as highly as I do myself," you will already have read. I am still chortling—for an Oxford playwright an Oxford word—at its exquisite impertinence.

A. B. W.

THE WEEK.

As a service to SHELLEY'S memory, MR. RICHARD EDGCUMBE would disprove that the poet ever signed himself "atheist, philanthropist" in a travellers' book. To this end it is necessary to regard as a forgery the so-called leaf torn from the travellers' book of Montanvert, bearing SHELLEY'S autograph with the alleged inscription, and which was pasted into a copy of "The Revolt of Islam" possessed by the late LORD HOUGHTON, and further, to regard the words "atheist, philanthropist" written in Greek opposite SHELLEY'S signature, seen at St. Martin, or some other village, by JOHN CAM HOBHOUSE, and carefully defaced by BYRON in HOBHOUSE'S presence, as having been written by one of those envious creatures who begin by scribbling "fool," "ass," in the books of their schoolmates, and continue their anonymous and impotent abuse whenever and wherever they can get a word slipped in. That the HOUGHTON autograph is a forgery is very possible, as LORD HOUGHTON himself admitted; but we altogether fail to see how anyone having a public or private grudge, real or imaginary, against SHELLEY, could find much vent for his spleen in calling him "philanthropist," nor do we see that there would have been any forgetfulness of "natural dignity" on SHELLEY'S part in writing this inscription himself. Of that "natural dignity" which is most commonly the defence of weak personalities and dull brains, and partakes largely of an aldermanic quality, SHELLEY had none. He had the dignity, the self-respect of genius, which led him to obey unquestioned the dictates of his mood; which was sometimes with him, and has been and will be with others, a light to lead astray; but which may very well have permitted him to subscribe himself "atheist, philanthropist," as the Shelleyan formula for Abu Ben Adhem's "one who loves his fellowmen."

BESIDES a long-promised volume of verse by MR. RUDYARD KIPLING, we are to have shortly new poems by SIR EDWIN ARNOLD and the late LORD LYTTON. "Potiphar's Wife" is to be the title-poem of SIR EDWIN'S book. It would be rash to assert that SIR EDWIN has been forestalled by the magnificent Phraxanor of CHARLES WELLS'S "Joseph and His Brethren." Whether his Egyptian woman succeeds or not in rivalling that younger sister of Cleopatra, we are sure, remembering his Magdalene, that she will be interesting, and, in all likelihood, most modern. LORD LYTTON'S volume is to be called "Marah," and will include the poem on which he was engaged at the time of his death. We note with pleasure that MESSRS. GEORGE BELL & SONS are about to add to their admirable "Aldine Series," SCOTT, SHELLEY, WORDSWORTH, and HERRICK.

IN thirteen volumes, quiet and sensible-looking but yet, in the quality of the paper and type, suggestive of the luxuries of wisdom, laughter, and poetry within, MESSRS. SAMPSON LOW & CO. publish the "Riverside Edition" of the works of OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES. The first three volumes are occupied with the evergreen "Breakfast-Table" series. Then comes "Over the Tea-Cups," the novels, stories, essays, and travels, the last three volumes being devoted to this Protean author's poetry. After MARK TWAIN, DR. HOLMES, so far as his works were known, has been the most widely read and generally appreciated of American writers. The public will not be slack to take advantage of the opportunity now given them to become acquainted with the whole range and capacity of an undoubted favourite.

TIRED of importing from America editions of a work containing relinquished conclusions and a principle laid down on at least one wrong basis, and tired of the constant misinterpretations of his later beliefs, MR. HERBERT SPENCER has at last produced a new English edition of his "Social Statics" (WILLIAMS & NORGATE). Many portions of the original work have been erased, others abridged, and the whole carefully revised. The purely systematic division of this work has been replaced by MR. SPENCER'S "Justice," that which is now issued in a revised form being the discussions which preceded the constructive division and the series of chapters in which the political implications were pointed out. With "Social Statics" is bound up "The Man *versus* the State," a revised version of the 1884 edition.

THE American portion of KAHN'S Travels was translated into English in the last century, but the English portion, which is said to transcend in completeness and accuracy of description any work of its age on England, is now translated for the first time by MR. JOSEPH LUCAS under the title of "Kahn's Account of His Visit to England" (MACMILLAN). KAHN was the son of a Swedish minister, and travelled in Norway, England, and America, in the interests of the Royal Swedish Academy of Science, during 1747—1751.

SOMEWHAT more varied in character than the three volumes which have gone before it, PROFESSOR FREEMAN'S fourth series of "Essays" (MACMILLAN), although only one of them, the paper headed "Augustodunum," is upon the same scale as his preceding studies of towns, fully merits the title "historical." The other pieces were written for periodicals, where they could not be treated so exhaustively. They contain real work, however, and must not be mistaken for "holiday articles," or else the indolent reader may find them, like PROFESSOR FREEMAN'S newspaper critic, a little "too learned."

MESSRS. CHAPMAN & HALL issue two handsome Travel volumes, "Siberia as it is," by MR. H. DE WINDT, and "The Naturalist in La Plata," by MR. W. H. HUDSON. The former contains a very characteristic introduction by MADAME NOVIKOFF. In the latter the author of that charming romance, "The Crystal Age," writes in his pleasant manner of the habits of the animals best known to him in La Plata.

THE fifth volume of MESSRS. DENT & CO.'S beautiful edition of LANDOR'S "Imaginary Conversations" contains dialogues of literary men, of famous women, and miscellaneous dialogues.

WITHIN a day or two will be published a new and very much enlarged edition of MR. SYDNEY BUXTON'S "Political Handbook." In view of the London County Council election, the new sections on "Ground Rents," "Municipal Death Duty," "Home Rule for London," etc., will be appreciated; while as regards the General Election, all the important questions included in the Newcastle Programme—and others, such as the Eight Hours Question—find a place. Another plain and easy guide to electoral righteousness, now in the press, is a cheap and "up-to-date" edition of the late MR. JOHN NOBLE'S "Facts for Politicians," in which there will be a completed London Programme, a summary of the onslaught upon MR. GOSCHEN'S finance, abstracts of the legislation of the last twelve months, and other fresh matter.

IF housekeepers are in earnest in wishing to benefit the unemployed in East London, they should buy BRYANT & MAY'S Matches, and refuse the foreign matches which are depriving the workers in East London of a large amount in weekly wages.

WE are asked to state that the Liberal leaders, so far from being pledged to the support of MR. JOHN WARD for Wandsworth, have the question of a Liberal candidate still under their consideration.

THE Authors' Club has now passed from the preliminary stage to that of actual existence. The club is to be founded upon a Limited Joint Stock Company, already established and registered, and the possession of a single share (of which there will be 600 of £5 each) will serve in lieu of entrance fee. When the first 600 shares are applied for and allotted, the election of members will be according to usual club-land law. The annual subscription is fixed at four guineas, and the entrance fee at ten guineas; the usual facilities and remissions being extended to country members. The number of members is fixed at 600; and the club house will be as near Piccadilly Circus as possible. The first directors are LORD MONKSWELL, MR. WALTER BESANT, MR. H. TEDDER (the well-known secretary and librarian of the "Athenæum"), and MR. OSWALD CRAWFURD, C.M.G. (chairman). The qualifications for membership are that a man should be a British subject, or a citizen of the United States; an author, in the widest acceptance of the term; a contributor to a leading periodical; or a journalist of established position.

AMONG the deaths announced since our last issue are those of CARDINAL MERMILLOD, whose nomination by the Pope in 1873 as Vicar-Apostolic of Geneva, with his consequent expulsion, was a "moment" in the Kulturkampf between the Swiss Government and the Vatican; DR. ASHTON OXENDEN, formerly Bishop of Montreal and Metropolitan of Canada, but best known in England by his religious and devotional works; SIR HENRY COTTON, lately a Lord Justice of Appeal; BARON OTTO LOWE, who was condemned by default in 1877 to one year's imprisonment for writing against PRINCE BISMARCK, and who thereupon adopted French nationality; MR. THOMAS STERRY HUNT, long head of the Geological Survey of Canada, a distinguished American chemist and mineralogist, and inventor of the ink used in printing greenbacks; MR. C. A. FYFFE, whose brilliant career was cut short by a foul and utterly unsupported charge; MR. ROBERT HOLFORD, the well-known picture collector; MR. HENRY DOYLE, C.B., the singularly able director of the National Gallery of Ireland; and MRS. NYE CHART, late lessee of the Brighton Theatre.

THE late LORD JUSTICE COTTON was one of those men of whom it is impossible to speak without great respect. His career through life was singularly uniform and successful, though not marked by any very great brilliancy. After winning high distinction at Eton and Oxford, and backed as he was by a first-rate City connection, he soon attained a large practice as a junior. When he took silk, twenty years after his call, he practised in the Court of the late VICE-CHANCELLOR MALINS, where he took part in a great many cases of great importance. After some years, however, the strain of continuous work in the somewhat turbulent *forum* in which his lot was cast seemed too much for him, and he thereupon confined his practice to cases in which he was taken into Court with special fees. In 1877, on the death of LORD JUSTICE MELLISH, he took his seat in the Court of Appeal, and was made a member of the Privy Council. Failing health compelled him to retire before completing the usual fifteen years' period of service. SIR HENRY COTTON was always noted for his singular courtesy and kindness, and the only fault that the critical generally found with his decisions was that he confined himself very strictly, and perhaps too cautiously, to the exact case before him, and was averse to laying down general principles. He never entered the House of Commons.

M. DE BLOWITZ AND M. RIBOT.

PARIS, February 24, 1892.

READERS of the Paris correspondence of the *Times* cannot fail to have been struck by the tone adopted by the writer with regard to the French Foreign Minister. M. Ribot was spoken to lately on the subject. At first he evaded an answer, but when pressed for a reply he said: "Well, if you wish to know why M. de Blowitz is not friendly towards me, it may be due to this circumstance. At the time I was nominated Minister of Foreign Affairs I received an invitation from M. de Blowitz to dine at his house to meet Lord Lytton. I was on sufficiently good terms with M. de Blowitz, but I did not know Lord Lytton. Now, as I was already appointed Minister, it was the part of the Ambassador of Great Britain, as of his colleagues of the Diplomatic Corps, to pay me the customary official visit. Therefore it was not seemly to expect that I should make the acquaintance of the representative of the Queen at a private house like M. de Blowitz's. Besides, as that personage is known to be indiscreet, it would have been foolish to have given him the desired opportunity for serving me up in the *Times*. That is why M. de Blowitz does not like me. M. de Blowitz also identified me with the *Journal des Débats*, with which he has been at war for some time. He has conceived the pretension of being Foreign Minister *in petto*, and criticising us as if he had a natural right to the post. All this, you understand, does not make the gentleman more beloved here."

PARIS PRICES.

(BY AN AGRICULTEUR DE FRANCE.)

HOUSEKEEPERS and annuitants, and all the crowds of people of fixed small incomes, are just now much agitated by the further advance in prices which must inevitably follow the great rise in the Customs duties. Apart from this last cause, Paris prices have for some time ruled higher than London rates; in fact, Paris has been within the last ten years rapidly becoming the dearest city in Europe, as strangers without unlimited incomes have long since discovered; and the doctors of the foreign colonies are now complaining that most of their former class of patients go and live, or die, elsewhere; "turning" the *place forte* of Paris in the through *trains de luxe* that need now never enter the town at all.

A convenient way of illustrating the dearness of Paris will be to take a round dozen of the most ordinary articles of daily household consumption, and compare a sterling pound's worth of each at the prices of one of the great London "stores" with the Paris quotations at one of the large groceries.

Bread it is not easy to compare, because of qualities and sizes; but let us begin with the best Hungarian flour, for example, and you will have to pay £1 7s. 8d. in Paris for your London pound's worth. In household flour the difference is less, the pound becoming only a guinea. The duty on imported flour is from 8 to 10 francs the 100 kilos, or about a halfpenny the lb. The French coffee-consumption per month compares with the amount of tea-drinking in England as $1\frac{3}{4}$ to 2, so let us next take coffee as a national necessary in France. £1 spent on coffee in London must become an expenditure of £1 4s. 11d. in Paris. The import-duty on this coffee is just 7d. the lb., and yields a revenue of $4\frac{1}{2}$ millions sterling, as against our $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions from tea. The Frenchman thus pays an extra million for the cup that cheers him. Let us next take sugar—and it will be seen that we are, without any premeditation too, working very much at a breakfast-table which, in this land of *liberté*, is very far from free. So changeable is the French

speculation in sugars, and so big is the price, and so strong is the ring, that the large grocers, like Potin, whom everyone knows, will not print their prices for refined loaf-sugar, but sell it day by day *au cours*, at the market level. But even for "Demerara" you must pay £3 2s. in Paris for what you can buy at London co-operative stores for £1. Curiously enough, the French consumption of sugar, which is only a third of the English amount per head, effects an almost exact counterpoise here. The import-tax is prohibitive at about 7d. the pound, and the internal excise on French beetroot sugar is about half that nominally, but so complicated with bounties and the beet standard that the sugar ring make fortunes by underselling every foreign market, while obliging the French populace to pay over seven millions sterling per annum extra for their sugar. But those of the Agriculteurs de France whose land will grow beet have no cause to complain. They had three years ago some 500,000 acres of it, and they have more now, for the sugar revenue went up £1,200,000 in the year 1891, just closed. Some English railway-workmen, who were lately over at Calais on a job, complained that sugar there was 6d. the pound, and bread 1s. "the gallon"—so they reckoned it; and the Paris octroi is, I believe, higher than that of Calais.

As to butter, one would scarcely at first blush believe that Londoners have as much "Normandy" butter in London for £1 as the Parisian can get of "Isigny" for £1 7s. 4d.; but so it is; and a pound's-worth of table-salt costs the French housewife £1 18s. 4d., or very nearly double what an English cook has to pay.

Fresh meat is difficult to compare, for the wholesale prices are no guide, and the markets are just now much disturbed by the recent fiscal changes. Besides, horseflesh, of which over a hundred specially-licensed butchers now sell 20,000 lbs. a day in Paris, keeps down the prices of those portions of other meat which are bought by the poorer classes. But take ham as an index which ought to be more stable than fresh meat, and the price of the very cheapest brands is 3s. 5d. dearer in Paris than my London standard pound's-worth. Furthermore, the new import-duties will raise ham in France a penny a pound higher. Cheese is another handy test, being much eaten in both countries. Herein Paris slightly undersells London—and it is the only article on my list wherein it does that—in so far as superior (Roquefort) cheese is concerned. This costs 19s. 2d. in Paris as against the London £1. But in the cheapest qualities, on Paris "Gruyère" as compared with London "American," £1 in London goes as far as £1 5s. 4d. in Paris; and this last is the fairer average comparison for cheese, to which the new duties will even add a halfpenny a pound more.

In fruits we can only take currants, on which the French "dried raisins" tax bears heavily. A pound of bad currants costs nearly 7d. in Paris, as compared with second qualities in London at 3d. It takes £2 4s. 9d. in Paris to buy a London pound's-worth of these *raisins de Corinthe*.

Artificial light is extremely costly in Paris. The very cheapest candles (*bougies*) are about twice as dear as in London—£1 19s. 9d. as against £1. The relative price of commonest "dips" (*chandelles*) is less, but even they figure out £1 2s. 1d. The excise on *bougies* is of course heavy. The French are greatly better off for soap than they were some years ago, when Bradshaw used to advise the common tourist to lay in a supply at his book-shop, and the best common house soap can now be bought for £1 6s. as against the London £1. But perhaps, as I have mentioned light, I ought to follow it with fuel; and there, again, contrast is not easy, the question being complicated by wood and charcoal in Paris; so I can only quote the latest price for kitchen coal (*charbon de terre pour cuisine*) of my own old-established wood and coal merchant on the boulevard de Latour-Maubourg, which is now 58 francs the 1,000 kilos, or over £2 7s. the ton. Of course, gas prices itself high accordingly; and as for refined petroleum, the import duty alone is now over £10 a ton, whereas London has it free.

As to drinks other than coffee, no useful comparison can be made. Most of the wine drunk in the wine-shops and sold by the grocers in Paris is made of *raisins secs* in the Saint-Denis presses, if not manufactured in more fearsome ways at the Bercy Docks; and the threepenny glasses of German beer in the brasseries—more glass and "false-collar" than beer, too—will in future be a halfpenny dearer, in consequence of the raising of the import-duty to sixpence a gallon, to spite "the Prussians." But the French bock will of course follow the rise, and the *boulevardier* will thus find—as he ought—that it is he himself who will have to pay, out of his own slim purse, for the luxury of indulging his patriotic emotions after this fashion.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

MR. BALFOUR'S FALL.

SIR,—The present position of Mr. Balfour recalls an article in THE SPEAKER some time back, in which this great man was ranked among politicians on the decline. The malignant folly of such a suggestion was equalled by its profane audacity. It came to this—that you, Sir, presumed to question the consensus of contemporaries which, in sure anticipation of the verdict of history, had proclaimed Mr. Balfour supreme as an administrator and as a legislator. True, some greybeards—you, presumably, among them—recollected the premature enthusiasm with which, at the outset of the American Civil War, ere a real battle had been won or lost, the admirers of General Maclellan hailed him as the young Napoleon.

But Mr. Balfour—had he not, with a "solid majority of a hundred" at his back, like another Pitt, tilted the Opposition, the Irish Opposition especially, on his nose? He was a young Minister, and had not carried many measures; still, they were sure to come.

Now, however, I confess, Sir, with reluctance, that you had at least, a semblance of a case. It may be said that the success of Mr. Balfour's administration of Ireland may be—say, partially—tested by the votes given at Cork for Captain Sarsfield; that his success as a legislator may be, to some extent, measured by the figures relating to the Land Purchase Act, or the unsympathetic laughter which greeted the introduction of his Local Government Bill. Mr. Balfour is said, appearances to the contrary, to be the most diffident of mortals, and only to be excited into seeming confidence by the adulation of admirers. If so, perhaps in a moment of philosophic doubt, he may recall the memorable line of Pope—

"It is the slaver kills, and not the bite."

I am, Sir, yours, with remorseful respect, F. E. T.
Marlborough, February 24th.

TURKS AND ARMENIANS.

SIR,—I have just read in your valuable journal an important correspondence from Constantinople under the heading "Armenia and Egypt." As I happen to be one of those Armenians who call the attention of Europe to the sufferings of the Christians in Turkey, I cannot forbear taking notice of certain allusions made by your correspondent. I regret that his good-faith should have been imposed upon so as to be made to believe that the Archbishop Khoren of Lusignan was a spy in the pay of the Sultan. It is Ottoman Machiavelism that has invented and spread this calumny, with the object of making that prelate hated before striking him. It was afraid of his popularity, and it was this popularity that drove the Caliph to spare to some extent this dignitary of the Church. Your correspondent, besides, admits that Mgr. de Lusignan sent to the French papers regular philippics against the despotic government of Abdul-Hamid II., which proves sufficiently that the distinguished priest had not abdicated his independent and patriotic spirit. It is in this patriotism that we must seek the true cause of the persecution directed against him. The Porte wants to crush, one by one, all the Armenians who have devoted their energies to the national question. After the death of the courageous patriarch Nersès, the originator of the Armenian question, the four delegates whom he had sent to the Berlin Congress remained defenceless before the vengeance of the Turks. Mr. S. Papazian died, still in time to escape; Mgr. Khrimian, at the age of nearly eighty, has been banished to Jerusalem; and the writer of these lines has been compelled to expatriate himself so as not to be buried in the deserts of Turkish Africa. There only remained Mgr. de Lusignan at Constantinople; and as they dared not take his life, they tried to kill

him morally. If the Turks treat in this manner, and in the very capital, a man of European reputation, what are they not capable of doing with the obscure Armenian peasant in the remotest provinces of Asiatic Turkey? Assisted by their Koordish and Circassian accomplices, they inflict every kind of torture on him. His moans sometimes reach the ears of the Armenians in the West, who hasten to call the attention of Europe to them. Your correspondent approves of the efforts of these patriots, but does not like them to urge the formation of revolutionary societies. As far as I am concerned, I do not belong to any such society; but my conscience does not permit me to blame those young Armenians who do not share your correspondent's ideas and reply to the objections of their conservative countrymen:—"The Powers have drawn up in favour of the Armenians Article 61 of the Treaty of Berlin. You have been clamouring for its application for the last fourteen years, and your efforts have only led to negative results. You do not know Europe; she does not back up a just cause because it is just, and peaceful means leave her unmoved; she only wakes at the roar of a torrent of blood, and only takes a real interest in those that kill or get killed." The responsibility which your correspondent attaches to certain Armenians in Europe rather rests with European diplomacy which, after encouraging the Armenians by promising them its protection, pitilessly abandoned them to the vengeance of their tormentors, and to all the suggestions of despair.—I am, Sir, etc.,

33, De Vere Gardens, W., February 20th, 1892. MINASSE TCHERAZ, Editor of *Armenia*.

A NATIONAL GALLERY OF BRITISH ART.

SIR,—The importance of preventing the addition of a collection of works by living artists to the National Gallery seems to me so great, that the rather severe language recently used in your columns on the subject is a matter upon which you deserve to be congratulated. The productions of living painters at present in the Gallery are so many spots on the sun, and would amply justify the Trustees in refusing Mr. Tate's offer, had it been ten times more magnificent financially than it is. At the same time, if Mr. Tate really wishes to make the nation a handsome present—and to cast any imputations on his motives seems to me neither necessary nor courteous—why should he not found a gallery of modern English pictures from which the Trustees of the National Gallery should have the right of removing to their collection any works they considered sufficiently important, provided that the painters of such works had been dead at least twenty-five years? Twenty-five years after a painter's death his productions could be dealt with without any suspicion of prejudice, and his real artistic value might be approximately estimated. If Mr. Tate believes that his pictures will hold their own, he could have little doubt that under these circumstances they would ultimately find a place in Trafalgar Square. The verdict of a committee, however carefully chosen, such as he proposes, would serve no useful purpose, for we have seen over and over again that the most authoritative contemporary critics have utterly failed to foretell the verdict of time. The proposal to add a Tate wing to the National Gallery seems open to the further objection that whatever land there is should be reserved for the time when an addition will be needed to contain the acquisitions which will be made by the Trustees in the usual way. Surely English Art will not be overlooked at the National Gallery so long as the present examples of such native immortals as Reynolds, Gainsborough, Turner, Constable, Crome, and Wilson are retained there. That English painting would gain more dignity by the addition to the National Gallery of the most popular Academy pictures of the last ten years is at least open to question.—I am, Sir, yours obediently,

CHARLES T. J. HIATT.

Primrose Club, Park Place, St. James's. February 21st, 1892.

SIR,—Will you allow me, as a diligent reader of THE SPEAKER, to utter a gentle but needed protest against the ruthless methods—I cannot call it criticism—of your Grand Mogul. Surely, at this late period, we Liberals ought to have learned more tolerance (even in respect to art) than he shows. I have been a seeker after truth all my life, and one fact has ever forced itself upon my mind—namely, that the man who on a question of opinion is cocksure is always wrong. There is another truth which is near akin to it; it is that he who is brutal in his assault is incapable of that discrimination of *rightness* which is of the essence of true criticism. It is needless to go into the "G. M.'s" opinions. How many we have seen equally trenchant, equally loud, equally "cocksure," and Time has pounded their views into nothingness. Art to me—to most thoughtful men who have dwelt upon the subject—is not what "G. M." would have us believe it is. It is, like literature, an expression of man's nature (of man's soul, if you will) in the presence of a greater nature. Like literature, it has its imperfections, its limits, its one-sidedness (so to speak). It attempts, as Bacon says of poetry, "to suit the shows of things to the desires of the mind." And every man giving himself to art must naturally express himself in his own way, and according to the limitations of his nature. There will (must), therefore, always be some art which is more or less of the day—documentary; but it is not the less art (in its way) than the more sublime conceptions of the great ones. Are our Crabbes and Goldsmiths the less lovable because Milton wrote? Because Giorgione put beams of beauty on canvas and Raphael enchanted the ages with his Madonnas, must we, therefore, bespatter Holman Hunt with mud? I hold no brief for Mr. Hunt (albeit I admire his art); but I think every Liberal should hold him in esteem, not only because of his strenuous allegiance to a high ideal, but because, to his cost, he has stood out for reform where—in regard to art—reform is so eminently needed. But the moral of my letter is, "Let us be tolerant"; and we shall be that by being less "cocksure," and, above all, let us avoid throwing mud.—I am, Sir, yours obediently,

A. T. S.

THE WISDOM OF STUPIDITY.

"I think there are great advantages in doing a stupid thing which has been done before."—*Speech of the First Lord.*

UNYOKE the Titans that perform our will:
Let Steam go sleep where geysers start and throb,
And dream of duties he must not fulfil,
His highest function—on the housewife's hob;
And bid the Lightning save his golden breath,
And only work in ruin and in death.

To the museum with the piston-rod,
The thudding paddle and the silent screw,
The pen that's held at home and writes abroad,
The subtle tongue that whispers through and through
The humming water, and the crust-clung rind
Of earth, earth's substance, and the roaring wind!

Break ope the ballot-box, and auction votes;
Withdraw the franchise from the illiterate—
Sense lies in letters, worth in well-cut coats;
Why did we ever list to Liberal prate?
Of cant about the people's rights get rid,
Undo the justice that our fathers did.

Then hey, for whip and horses, sail and oar!
Sing ho, for everything that's tedious!
The running footman's dress and wand restore,
And give the mounted post his blunderbuss:
Back to the past as swiftly as we can;
Re-fang the burglar, horse the highwayman.

Transmogrify the electoral machine;
Let money buy again what nothing buys;
Set up the hustings in the village green,
And bid Old-Sarum from its ashes rise;
Concentrate once again in privileged hands
The power we fear widespread in three broad lands.

For "stupid things that have been done before"
Have "great advantages" for Tory squires,
Peers, placemen, parasites, and—which is more—
For that unmanly hybrid who aspires
To tread the Primrose path to Parliament,
The rueful Liberal-Dissentient.

FESTE.

A LEAP-YEAR IDYLL.

ONCE on a time there lived a little maiden
In that strange land that lies beneath the sun,
Whose loyal heart with love was overladen
For one

Who meant to keep unmarried till his latter-day—
Whose joys were simple, and whose cares were few—
Who read his *Times*, and revelled in his *Saturday Review*.

It was the longed-for year when love-sick spinsters
Lead bachelors, who have not sought a bride,
Up middle-aisles of "dim, religious" minsters
With pride.

On Leap-Year wooings and on Leap-Year winnings
The mind of the undaunted maiden ran;
So she—determined to enjoy her innings—
Began,

(Her voice, as she proceeded, growing snappier);
"Dear Sir, however happy you may be,
I'm certain you'd be infinitely happier
With me.

"A wife would share your every little trouble,
Increasing every joy your heart that fills;
She'd halve your income, and exactly double
Your bills.

"Hark how the poets Woman's praise are singing!
You doubt their words, but you will find them true
When 'pain and anguish' undertake the wringing
Of you.

"'O Man, proud Man!' how sad a fate would his be,
If 'lovely Woman' from his side retired;
Pyramus, when divided from his Thisbe,
Expired:

"Jack minus Jill, forsooth, had fallen flatter:
Darby was nobody without his Joan:
Jack Spratt could never have cleaned out the platter
Alone:

"King Edward found his wife's assistance handy
When poisoned arrows nearly spoiled the fun:
Griselda proved her *modus operandi*
A 1.

"To tell like stories I can gladly go on
For hours and hours, with rapid tongue and glib—
Quote Enid, Portia, Juliet, and so on,
Ad lib—

"To prove my point until at last you see it:
(And you must take my word for it till then)."
The hapless victim meekly sighed, "So be it,
Amen."

ELLEN THORNEYCROFT FOWLER.

A LITERARY CAUSERIE.

THE SPEAKER OFFICE,
Friday, February 26th, 1892.

THE habit, into which so many people fall, of reviewing books has been very seriously attacked of late. Mr. Howells says that it induces bad manners. Mr. Birrell declares it to be "a trade thing," and proceeds—"Were a literary paper to have no advertising columns, do you suppose it would review half the books it does? Certainly not." A third assailant, yet more lethally minded, asserts that reviews are only read by the authors themselves; and it has been thought worth while to reply that, even were this true, reviewing would still serve a useful end, if only by keeping our writers obedient to grammar and careful of the purity of our English tongue.

But it is notoriously inexpedient that commercial enterprise should proceed from benevolence alone; and in this case is not the benevolence itself a bit puzzle-headed? Is it really our duty to preserve the purity of the English tongue and its grammar? Language after all was made for the use of the public; and if an author chooses to talk "like the public does," instead of as Lindley Murray talked, why should we interfere? Why should we stand between our fellows and the grammatical millennium "when a plural subject shall lie down with a singular verb and a little conjunction shall lead them"? For my own part when I catch the plural subject and singular verb making friends in an Elizabethan sentence the laxity pleases me. Not a few of us delight in the rank colloquialisms of Bunyan, holding them indeed inseparable from the charm of the man. How then are we entitled to show indignation over the split infinitives of Mr. Bret Harte? The future may be with the split infinitive. Were it not better to resignedly admit it than pedantically to oppose?

I spoke the other day of an Examination Paper in "English Language and Literature" in which a company of middle-class children below the age of fifteen were invited to "correct the English"—save the mark!—of certain passages from Shakespeare, Dryden, Pope. And I tried to show that if we ask our children to play the fool with Shakespeare it is unreasonable to complain, later on, of their snubbing *us*. What is attained by informing a boy of fifteen that

"Man never is, but always to be blest—"

won't parse? Pope didn't mean it to be parsed. And it seems to me that even a living author, when informed by a reviewer that his sentences are not grammatical, must settle the question by answering, "True: they are not. What then?"

As a matter of fact you will find that the authors whose "styles" are most belauded to-day have been frequent and flagrant offenders against grammar. Thackeray's style, you will be told, is flawless, incomparable, the perfection of easy, well-mannered writing. Yet Thackeray's use of "and which" might now and then make a grammarian turn in his grave. And what are we to say of the following, from a careful page of "Esmond"?—

"The Restoration did not bring enough money to the Lord Castlewood to restore this ruined part of his house; where were the morning parlours, above them the long music-gallery, and before which stretched the terrace, where, however, the flowers grew again which the boots of the Roundheads had trodden in their assault, and which was restored without much cost, and only a little care, by both ladies who succeeded the second viscount in the government of this mansion."

As Charles Reade once pointed out, where Addison could be content to write "My being his nearest neighbour gave me some knowledge of his habits," the average scribbler would substitute "The fact of my being his nearest neighbour gave me," etc. And this precisely inaccurate person is the very man who, reviewing "Esmond," would declare the above passage ungrammatical and advise Thackeray to learn to write English.

If I find the perfection of polite English prose in Jane Austen rather than in Thackeray, it is my own affair, and I hope to escape officious contempt. It is enough to claim what everybody will grant—that Jane Austen wrote admirably. Yet her employment of the *Nominativus Pendens* must shock anybody connected, however remotely, with a sixpenny paper: and if reviewers had been aware of her work while she lived, they had infallibly spared no effort to correct it.

But there was one man who, during Jane Austen's life-time, did take the deepest interest in her work. He was no less a person than the Prince Regent, and he kept a set of her novels at each of his various houses, and his librarian, Mr. Clarke, even sent the poor lady some counsel about her work. It is a delicious story, and full of instruction upon the value of contemporary advice. All reviewers should have it by heart. These gentlemen are so very free with their counsel: they insist so earnestly that Mr. Meredith should adapt himself to their intelligence, that Mr. Henry James should write adventure-books and Mr. Stevenson a big novel in three volumes. It certainly will be worth their while to consider the case of Mr. J. S. Clarke, librarian to the Prince Regent.

While "Emma" was in the press, and Miss Austen staying in London to nurse a sick brother, the Prince sent his librarian to call upon her and invite her to pay a visit to Carlton House, if she would like to inspect the State apartments, etc. She went. "It does not seem," says Mrs. Malden in her monograph on Jane Austen, "to have occurred to the Prince to

be there in person; perhaps this could hardly have been expected; but she was received with great cordiality by the librarian, Mr. Clarke, and during the visit he told her that, if she cared to do so, the Prince would be happy to accept the dedication of any future novel of hers." Some time after, the good Clarke went further than this. He offered her an idea. Prince Leopold was then about to be married to the Princess Charlotte, and had made Mr. Clarke his private secretary. Straightway the good man wrote announcing his promotion, and suggesting to Miss Austen that "an historical romance, illustrative of the august house of Cobourg, would just now be very interesting."

What would one not give to have seen the incomparable Jane smiling to herself as she penned her profoundly serious reply?—

"My dear Sir. . . . Under every interesting circumstance which your own talents and literary labours have placed you in, or the favour of the Regent bestowed, you have my best wishes. Your recent appointments, I hope, are a step to something still better. In my opinion, the service of a Court can hardly be too well paid, for immense must be the sacrifice of time and feeling required by it. You are very kind in your hints as to the sort of composition which might recommend me at present, and I am fully sensible that an historical romance founded on the House of Saxe-Cobourg might be much more to the purpose of profit and popularity than such pictures of domestic life in country villages as I deal in. But I could no more write a romance than an epic poem. I could not sit seriously down to write a serious romance under any other motive than to save my life; and if it were indispensable for me to keep it up and never relax into laughing at myself or at other people, I am sure I should be hung before I had finished the first chapter. No, I must keep to my own style, and go on in my own way; and though I may never succeed again in that, I am convinced that I should totally fail in any other."

The moral is that an author should be allowed, by reviewers and other people, to work out his own salvation. I was about to say that he should be let alone altogether; and in spite of Mr. Besant I doubt if even a peerage will do him much good. But I am reminded that there are two institutions in this country which can, and should, pay great writers a fitting honour. The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge ought, one would think, to be interested in letters. They have honorary degrees to confer, and these degrees, when well bestowed, do equal honour to those who receive and those who confer them. Why, then, has it been left to a Scottish University to pay the first compliment this week to a writer who, by general admission, has for years been one of the first half-dozen in England, and is now one of the first three? It is so easy to be less intelligent than Aberdeen.

A. T. Q. C.

REVIEWS.

VON MOLTKE'S HISTORY OF THE FRANCO-GERMAN WAR.

THE FRANCO-GERMAN WAR OF 1870–71. By Field-Marshal Count Helmuth von Moltke. Translated by Clara Bell and Henry W. Fischer. Two vols. London: T. R. Osgood, McIlvaine & Co.

THE first instalment of Count von Moltke's works creates a certain sense of disappointment. The *précis* of the campaign of 1870-71 is a valuable addition to military literature. No one could have written it as the great Chief of the Staff has done. Yet it is inevitable that we should look for something more than a condensed history of the war, for frequent glimpses behind the scenes at the German headquarters, for the comments of the principal director, and for the many lessons which he could have delivered with force unrivalled. It is characteristic of the man that these expectations should not be fully realised, and that he should have given a fresh proof of self-restraint. Such criticism as Von Moltke could have given to the world has its drawbacks, and he believed that it was "a pious and patriotic duty never to disturb the prestige which connects the glory of our army with certain personages." Thus the work, though written from the standpoint of the Chief of the Staff, rarely strays from the regions of pure narrative, and is, in the main, a highly condensed version of the great Staff History, which now receives Von Moltke's personal *imprimatur*—an awkward fact for the theorists who have sought to disparage it.

History contains nothing more striking than the campaign in which, although the regular armies of France disappeared within four weeks—imprisoned in Germany or locked up in their own fortresses—the spirit of a great military people was yet able to assert itself. Written for students of war, the extreme condensation and severity of style of the *précis* render it unsuited for the purposes of a popular text-book; but here and there, in passages possessing more than mere professional interest, we obtain an insight into the mind of the author. Peace, we are told, is no longer, as a rule, endangered by the "ambition of monarchs. . . . The passions of the people, its dissatisfaction with interior conditions and affairs, the strife of parties and the intrigues of their leaders are the causes" of modern wars. Among such causes is the influence of the Bourse. "Mexico and Egypt have been swamped with European armies simply to satisfy the demands of the *haute finance*." France, in 1870, was "informed by its representatives that it desired war with Germany."

The opening moves of this great game of war are described in clear and terse language, which serves to throw their teaching into strong relief. France had an ambitious plan of campaign, correct in conception, but wholly dependent on conditions which did not exist. Nothing was ready. Regiments were unequipped, fortresses unprepared. Everywhere confusion reigned supreme. "On se débrouillera" was the vain hope of the French authorities—as possibly of our own War Office magnates. Meanwhile, swiftly and in perfect order, the hosts of Germany gathered darkly upon the Rhine. The fictions which have attached to the "complete plan" supposed to have been prepared in advance by Von Moltke are coldly brushed aside. "The advance to the frontiers alone was pre-arranged in every detail." The enemy was to be found, attacked, and forced "back from the fertile southern States into the narrower tract on the north." Above all, Paris, which was much more than the mere capital of France, was to be taken. How this was to be accomplished must be "left to the decision of the hour." One weak stroke was delivered by the French at Saarbrück. Painful indecision supervened, and then at Weissenburg on the 4th of August, and at Wörth and Spicheren on the 6th, the power of the tremendous weapon which Von Moltke wielded was heavily felt. The frontier battles were hard fought on both sides. At Weissenburg a weak French Division was overpowered, but the Geisberg Château was gallantly defended. At Wörth the German 20th Brigade stumbled upon MacMahon's force of 40,000 men, strongly posted. The Eleventh and Fifth German Army Corps, which, contrary to the previous intention of the Crown Prince, had marched to the sound of the guns, became quickly involved. "The battle was a succession of attacks on both sides," in which the Germans lost 489 officers and 10,000 men; but the French were broken up and driven to headlong retreat. On the day of Spicheren "a battle was neither expected nor probable." The 14th Division of the German Seventh Corps found the French entrenched, and, in entire ignorance of their strength, at once engaged Frossard's Corps. Again the Germans gathered swiftly to the sounds of battle; but not till nightfall were the French driven from their position. Napoleon III. might unquestionably have won this battle if he had reinforced Frossard with troops which were close at hand. Spicheren, writes Von Moltke, "certainly had not been anticipated"; but "a tactical victory rarely fails to coincide with a strategic policy." The French plan of campaign

was now hopelessly destroyed, and resistlessly the three great German armies swept westward, while all Europe stood astonished.

The description of the terrible battles of the 14th, 16th, and 18th of August round Metz shows a marvellous grasp of the situation. Von Moltke appears to doubt his adversary's intention to break away towards Verdun. "It seems," he writes of the fighting of the 16th, "that the Marshal's first object was not to be forced away from Metz. . . . We are tempted to fancy that political reasons alone induced Bazaine, thus early in the game, to attach himself to Metz." In any case Gravelotte-St. Privat decided the matter, and the surrender of Bazaine, locked up in a fortress wholly unprepared for such a contingency, became only a question of time. Special interest attaches to the account of MacMahon's disastrous movement to Sedan, and the right-wheel of the army of the Crown Prince—the most decisive strategic stroke of the war. The last of the regular armies of France had now disappeared from the scene; the whole fabric of the Empire had fallen; the invaders closed round Paris; "but the German army had still great difficulties to overcome."

"France had a million of available men. Four hundred thousand chassepôts and two thousand guns in store could arm these troops, and the workshops of England, as a neutral Power, were ready to complete their outfit as a matter of business. Such means of war, backed by the active patriotism of the nation, might offer a prolonged resistance if governed by a powerful will. That will was Gambetta's."

It is perhaps natural that the old soldier should despise the amateur directors of war who dare to confront him.

"M. de Freycinet, also a civilian, served under Gambetta as a sort of Chief of the General Staff, and the energetic but dilettante commandership exercised by these gentlemen cost France very dear. Gambetta's rare energy and unrelenting perseverance availed, indeed, to induce the entire population to take up arms; but not to direct these masses on a uniform plan. Without giving them time to be drilled into fitness for the field, he sent them out with ruthless cruelty, insufficiently prepared, to carry out ill-digested plans against an enemy on whose firm solidity all their courage and devotion must be wrecked. He prolonged the struggle with great sacrifice on both sides, without turning the balance in favour of France."

But these raw levies redeemed the military honour of a great people whom crushing disaster had not sufficed to overwhelm. Fully two-thirds of this history are occupied with the struggle prolonged after the disappearance of the regular army of France. In Von Moltke's words, "Fresh forces, massive but incompetent, equalised the original numerical superiority of the Germans, and it needed twelve more battles to ensure the decisive siege of the enemy's capital. Twenty fortified places were taken, and not a single day passed without a struggle, great or small." How the hand of the Chief of the Staff continued to guide the German armies the work clearly shows, even though his personality is studiously kept in the background. Caution and boldness of decision were alike displayed. No measure of success ever induced him to underrate the enemy; his grasp of the entire situation over a great theatre of war was never for a moment relaxed.

The Appendix, written about seven years earlier than the *précis*, posses-es a special interest. Evidently the fictions which gathered round the campaigns of 1866, 1870-1 nettled the veteran. The imagined Councils of War seem to have roused him from his wonted calm. In memorable words, in which we trace the latent fire, he sweeps them aside for ever, and for once asserts his position as the sole responsible adviser of his master.

"The separation of the two armies (in Bohemia), which was for the present intentionally maintained, allowed of either plan being followed; but mine was the serious responsibility of advising His Majesty which. When, on the evening of the 2nd of July, 1866, news arrived of the concentration of the Austrians on the Bistritz, 'Thank God,' I said, sprang out of bed, and hastened across to the King. . . . After a brief explanation on my part, he said he fully understood the situation, decided on giving battle the next day with all three armies united, and desired me to transmit the necessary orders to the Crown Prince. . . . The whole interview with His Majesty lasted barely ten minutes. No one else was present. This was the Council of War before Königgrätz."

It is impossible not to wish that the *précis* had been written with the freedom, the vigour, and the eloquence which characterise this remarkable Appendix.

The translation, and especially the military editing, of the work leave much to be desired. The German verb *umgehen*, used in reference to a fortress, signifies more than to "avoid"—in correct phrase it is "to turn." "*Alle drei Armeen in gleiche Höhe zu bringen*," is not well rendered by "in order to get the three armies on a same front." The term "rear flank" is unknown to military terminology. Defects of this kind are unfortunately abundant. It is to be regretted, also, that more maps have not been supplied. The voluminous Staff History is not within the reach of everyone, and by the many who have not studied it, the description of (say) the battles round Metz cannot well be followed in the absence of plans.

Twenty years have passed since the great campaign was fought. The army of France has risen from the ashes of 1871, and the work of regeneration and reconstruction has been quietly but surely carried out. It may well be that the perfection of organisation which Germany has laboriously attained is not yet reached by her rival; but the tendency, far too prevalent in this country since 1870, to ignore altogether the natural genius for war which the French nation has shown for hundreds of years, affords a striking proof of shallow judgment. A military system rotten throughout was shattered before one on which all the science and forethought of Von Moltke had conferred the utmost completeness then conceivable. Even so, at a period of irremediable disaster, the military aptitude of the French was amply attested. Prussia, after Jena, found no Gambetta.

OLD TESTAMENT THEOLOGY.

The Divine Library of the Old Testament: its Origin, Preservation, Inspiration, and Permanent Value. Five Lectures by A. F. Kirkpatrick, B.D., Regius Professor of Hebrew in the University of Cambridge. London: Macmillan & Co. 1891.

Old Testament Theology; or, The History of Hebrew Religion from the Year 800 B.C. By Archibald Duff, M.A., LL.D., Professor of Old Testament Theology in the Yorkshire United Independent College, Bradford. Vol. I., from 800 B.C. to Josiah, 640 B.C. London, and Edinburgh: Adam & Charles Black. 1891.

A Short Commentary on the Book of Daniel, for the Use of Students. By A. A. Bevan, M.A., Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. Cambridge: At the University Press. 1892.

Professor Kirkpatrick's volume is by a believer in the uniqueness of the Christian religion, and in the divinity of that preparation for it of which the Old Testament is the record. But it is the attempt to state the human element in the Old Testament, as far as this has been discovered by modern historical and linguistic criticism. The volume consists of five lectures—four of them delivered in the Cathedral of St. Asaph, to a gathering of clergy and laity from different parts of the diocese, and one at Ely on the appearance of the Revised Version. The first two show how the books of the Old Testament have grown to their present form by the action of ordinary literary processes; the third illustrates the same facts from the history of the text, which does not give proofs of a miraculous preservation; the fourth expounds the divine element in the Old Testament, and what the books themselves mean by their inspiration; and the fifth treats of the permanent value of the Old Testament for the Christian Church. Throughout, the author shows himself a firm believer in the dogmas of the Christian religion, and that the Old Testament "as fulfilled in Christ" is still valid for the Christian Church. But he feels it "idle to invoke dogma to defeat critical and historical research, conducted upon sound principles and limited to its proper sphere."

In this reasonable and reverent temper Mr. Kirkpatrick has written one of the best popular treatises in English on the Old Testament as a

whole. Its perusal can only be productive of light and patience in those clerical and lay circles where light and patience are at present so badly needed. There is little that is new in the book; Mr. Robertson Smith told the English public nearly all that is here twelve years ago. But tradition clings hard to its own assumptions, and requires at frequent intervals, and from authorities it respects, an exposition of the facts of the case, such as Mr. Kirkpatrick gives. The hard literalist theories about the Bible, which are clung to by half Christendom with so much passion as the only safe and vital truth, will not be dispersed by mere attacks upon their unspiritual and impossible character. The only way to meet them is by plain statements of the Bible's evidence about itself—what is a prophet's own consciousness of his inspiration, and what does a book itself say about its composition and authorship? Mr. Kirkpatrick answers these questions, as on a larger scale Canon Driver answers them in his recently published "Introduction," by simply showing that the Bible makes no claims to by the kind of infallibility, or to the kind of divine interference, or even to all the human authorship, which tradition has foisted upon it. The evidence from Jeremiah and the Pentateuch is admirably put and conclusive. On the "Second Isaiah" he is not so emphatic as he might have been; he omits the chief and conclusive proof for the exilic authorship—that the presence of Cyrus, already at the height of his success, is an essential part of the prophet's argument for the deity of Jehovah. Nor does he fairly tackle the important question of Deuteronomy. Mr. Kirkpatrick is a cautious and conservative critic. Perhaps the most original part of his volume, and in some respects the most valuable, is his energetic protest against the relegation by modern critics of so large a part of the Psalter to the Maccabean epoch. He contributes a very able note against the position taken up by Canon Cheyne's Bampton lectures; and successfully shows that the reasons for it are as subjective and arbitrary as those for the earlier and more conservative positions from which Cheyne rightly revolts.

Besides detailing this human share in the production of the Old Testament, Mr. Kirkpatrick attempts, chiefly in his fourth lecture, to define the divine element, or to explain inspiration. Here he is always sensible and moderate, and, where he is defining what inspiration is *not*, he is exact and clear. Rejecting from the content of inspiration, independence of other records, immunity from error in matters of science or history, and freedom from imperfection, relativity and accommodation, he finds proof for a divine inspiration of the Old Testament in the essential unity which characterises it, and in the response of the soul to its message. Inspiration is as easy to feel, as impossible to analyse, as life. It is not verbal and mechanical, but vitalising and "dynamic." In his statement of these conclusions, Mr. Kirkpatrick is never ambiguous, and abounds in instances of fact. But he could have immensely strengthened his argument by some statement and illustration of the absolute uniqueness of the Old Testament teaching, in the greater Semitic system of religion from which it sprang. Modern Semitic research, while it shows how many of the Hebrew institutions and rites were the common Semitic heritage, leaves it impressively evident that the body of moral and religious truth, which is the glory of the Old Testament, is not explicable by any historical or natural descent. And this uniqueness may be clearly shown to be derived alone from the *character* of the Hebrew God—that is, from the character in which this people alone, of all the peoples of ancient history, felt the Most High revealing Himself. The incomparable law of the Old Testament is based in every detail upon Israel's unrivalled conscience of their God: and all the prophets explicitly derive their power and the truth they announce from their consciousness of immediate and direct communion with His spirit.

Dr. Duff's book is written from a scientific standpoint by an expert and enthusiastic scholar. Its merits are real, and the more welcome for their rarity in works of the kind. But they suffer intolerably from the style in which the book is composed, its defective arrangement, and some extraordinary caprices of scholarship. Single words are small points, yet in a book written with the laudable ambition to be attractive to the English public, we ought not to be repelled by such irritating Germanisms as "Amosian," "David-revelation," and "Amos-revelation," the "Amos-faith," "Amos-phenomena." There is a good deal of exuberant commonplace—"deliberate and violent alcoholic self-excitement," and the like. The style, as a whole, is diffuse and often vague. Readers who know the subject will discern that there is an accurate and remarkably vivid perception of it in the author's own mind. But the warmth in which he thinks—while it helps us to understand the statement of the preface that the pleasure which the book gave as lectures to the Professor's students "was evidently deep"—has unfortunately fused the forms of his thinking, and we constantly miss the exact definition and sharpness of outline necessary to a historical work. Just when we begin to appreciate how precisely and methodically he could lay out the subject in hand, he blurs his page by adulation of his theme, and for doctrine we have rapture. We feel warmed, indeed, but hazy. A plain statement of the facts of the question, without metaphor or digression, would, for instance, have been far more useful to the student than the opening Book of the volume on the Pentateuch and its relation to the Prophets. And so throughout. The picturesque visions of the circumstances of the various prophets are very good; but a simple recital of the chief political facts of their times would have been far better. It would, for instance, have assisted the student to understand one difficulty which Dr. Duff, following Guthe, emphasises but does not explain: why the climax of Isaiah's earlier prophecies should have been a great Prince, while in the later the Prince almost entirely disappears, and the City, Zion, is the principal hope. This change followed, of course, the political fortunes of the time: when Isaiah longed for a righteous ruler, it was because Ahaz was on the throne; when he set himself to assert the inviolableness of Zion, it was because Zion was threatened. Again, Dr. Duff's eagerness to emphasise one half of a doctrine carries him beyond almost all recollection of the other half—as, for instance, in his treatment of "holiness" and the Hebrew word for "holy," in which one of the chief contents of the meaning, that of "sublimity," is almost entirely ignored. But it is the caprices of scholarship which most startle us in this book; for example, the translations "Lordly Jehovah," "Jehovah of the Elohim," and especially "Torah of the Deliverer." It will hardly be credited that to-day a Professor of Old Testament Literature, conversant with the latest works on his subject, should offer the last of these, "Torah of the Deliverer," as the true translation of Torath-Mosheh, the Law or Instruction of Moses. Yet in cold blood—if the phrase may be used of so persistently enthusiastic a writer—Dr. Duff informs his readers that a Hebrew would have so understood the phrase, and he seems to offer it as a way out of the difficulty of attributing the whole Pentateuch to Moses! Such an escapade in translation is enough to dissipate the credit of any book for scholarship.

With these considerable drawbacks, Dr. Duff's work is of value. It is an independent study of the subject—original in its merits as well as in its errors. Dr. Duff everywhere shows the connection of contemporary history with the teaching of the prophet. He is conscious of the progressive character of revelation, and among the most interesting paragraphs of his volume are those in which he relates what each of the prophets left to be added by his successors. Dr. Duff is at his best when he presents the ethical contents of a prophecy. In his

strong, sometimes brilliant, sense of the moral force and majesty of the prophets, in his summaries of their teaching on righteousness and the vices of their day, and in his belief in Hebrew prophecy as a message for our own time, Dr. Duff is stimulating and helpful. There is good material for preachers in this volume, which they will easily be able to separate from the crudities and frequent vagueness.

Mr. Bevan's "Short Commentary on the Book of Daniel" is a work too technical for discussion in these columns; but it may be welcomed here on behalf of the public as the appearance of a new generation in our native schools of Biblical criticism. It will give its author, a young Cambridge scholar, a high reputation. Mr. Bevan does not discuss the theology of Daniel, but limits himself to the linguistic and historical questions connected with the book, which we all know are a great multitude and very troublesome. In a remote department of Semitic philology, and in very intricate passages of history, Mr. Bevan shows himself a master; his argumentative powers—if sometimes negligent of what is to be said on the other side—are considerable; and, therefore, though a Commentary and collection of Prolegomena, his book is readable from first to last—it is very readable. The style is strong and lucid. The public will find here an intelligible, concise, and complete statement of the latest conclusions of the advanced school of Old Testament criticism. Mr. Bevan assigns the Book of Daniel to the first half of the second century B.C.; and defends its literary and historic unity.

THE ARREST OF LOUIS XVI.

L'Événement de Varennes. Par Victor Feurnel. Paris: H. Champion.

The flight of the Royal Family of France to Varennes in June, 1790, is one of the saddest, as well as one of the most picturesque, events in history. It is equally thrilling, if we regard its details or its consequences. The student lingers with breathless interest over each incident: the delays in Paris, the false security on the road, the strange combination of accidents which led to the capture, the wavering balance between success and failure, between life and death, until the moment when the Duc de Choiseul shut the carriage door on the monarch whom he knew that he had betrayed to the scaffold. The story is, perhaps, best known to English readers by the poetical narrative of Carlyle. His account is indeed full of inaccuracy: he neglected authorities easily within his reach, those which he consulted he did not read with care. Whenever he gave reins to his imagination, it ran riot in an unaccountable manner. He is only trustworthy as an historian when he describes what he has seen with his own eyes. Yet there is, perhaps, no event of importance in history which is more completely known in all its details. The affair was the subject of a judicial investigation before the Court of Orleans, and the depositions of the witnesses are preserved. Truth is, after all, stranger than fiction, and the plain, unvarnished relation of the circumstances as they occurred is more exciting than the gorgeous pageant which the English historian unfolds before us.

Among those who have done good service in the historical examination of the evidence, M. Victor Feurnel has for more than twenty years held an honoured place. His articles in the *Revue des Questions Historiques* for 1868 are indispensable to any enquirer. He had indeed special qualifications for the task. His family had its origin in Varennes, and he lived there himself from his earliest infancy. He grew up amongst those who had seen the arrest, and knew one of the principal actors in his extreme old age. He used to see Roland, fallen into an imbecile dotage, sitting on a bench before his father's house, making strange gestures with his arms which seemed to enact anew the shot fired at Goguelat. He had been driven mad by the excitement of the part he played. The articles published in 1868 form the basis of the present volume.

An ordinary well-informed person asked to state what he knew about the flight to Varennes in a "general ignorance" paper, would probably, from recollections of his Carlyle, lay stress on the following particulars. He would say that the date of the voyage was delayed a month, because the Queen required a new dressing-case; that the Queen kept the party waiting a very long time because she lost her way in the Rue du Bac, on the other side of the river; that the journey was made in a conspicuous gilded-and-yellow coach, sure to attract attention; that the royal party travelled at "the slowest drayrate," from three to four miles an hour; that the King constantly and indiscreetly showed himself, and on being arrested took it quietly and asked for something to eat. The statements are not only untrue, but are the very reverse of the truth. The principal delay on the day of departure was caused by Bouillé, who asked for more time for the moving of troops. The Queen did not, so far as we know, lose her way, and certainly did not keep the party waiting ten minutes. The journey was made in a new travelling carriage of the ordinary type, which was painted green and black. The party travelled a hundred and fifty miles, not eighty-nine, as Carlyle unaccountably declares, at the average rate of about seven miles an hour, including all stoppages, which is not a bad rate for so long a journey. The King apparently only left the carriage once, and returned immediately; indeed, although Drouet was sure of his identity, it was not generally admitted until the King confessed it himself. On being arrested the King asked for nothing.

The saddest part of the story is that the fugitives had a number of chances in their favour, any one of which, by turning out well, might have proved their salvation. Choiseul expected the *Berline* to arrive at Pont-Sommevesle at two or half-past. He says that he left that post at a quarter to six. The travellers could not have reached it later than half-past six, probably earlier. If he had sent a detachment towards Chalons, or had left Goguelat at the post-house, or had retired very slowly towards Orbeval, the catastrophe would have been averted. Choiseul's narrative is quite untrustworthy, and it is probable that he left his post much earlier than he states. If Choiseul and his hussars had gone to Varennes by the ordinary route of St. Ménéhould, if they had halted at the parting of the ways, and had not lost themselves in woods and morasses, the King must have come up with them. Again, if D'Andoins had not unsaddled his dragoons just before the travellers arrived, they would not have been disarmed by the municipality, and would have formed an escort. Lagache, if he is still to be regarded as a hero, might have saved the Monarchy if he had not lost his way. Damas, who commanded at Clermont, had unfortunately just let his men out of hand. Charles Bouillé and Raigecourt shut themselves up in their bedroom at the inn at Varennes when a stroll up the town would have prevented the disaster. They even allowed the bridge over the Aire to be blockaded under their very nose. The orderly they sent along the road to Clermont actually passed the travelling-carriage without recognising that it was what he was looking for. Valory, the King's courier, just stopped short at the bridge, when a few steps more would have brought him to the inn where the relays were stabled, Goguelat having arbitrarily altered their position. The Queen's hairdresser, Léonard, spread dismay along the route between St. Ménéhould and Varennes, and, just when the alarm might have stimulated Bouillé into action, took the wrong road to Verdun instead of the right one to Stenay; the body-guard ordered the Clermont postillions to drive to Varennes in the hearing of the St. Ménéhould postillions, who had not yet ridden away. If any one of these misfortunes had been averted, the course of European history during the last hundred years might have been altered.

For the flight was not only an escape but a conspiracy. Its object was not only to secure the safety of the Royal Family but to upset the fabric of revolutionary government in France and to establish the throne on a firm support of foreign bayonets.

The principal additions to M. Feurnel's previous articles in the volume now before us are to be found in a chapter giving an account of the later attempts to escape on the part of the Royal Family, which, however, came to nothing. Perhaps in the most hopeful of them, Gustavus III., King of Sweden, was the moving spirit, and Count Fersen, as before, the intermediary. The attempts continued up to the moment of the attack on the Tuileries of August 10th, 1792, and there was a project of rescuing Louis XVI. even on his way to execution. The appendix contains some unpublished matter, and other documents which throw light on the character of the chief actors in the scene. M. Feurnel thinks that the credit of the arrest was principally due to Drouet; that the King's passport would have been passed at the Rue d'Or had not Drouet protested, and that the municipality of Varennes would have given way if it had not been for him. The most painful documents are two letters of the "rigorous quartermaster," Lagache, written within a week of the flight, full of abject entreaties for forgiveness, saying that he galloped away not to assist the King, but because he was afraid of being compromised in the "crime" of the Duc de Choiseul.

The history of this evasion which did not succeed recalls the story of another which was executed under better auspices. On the day after Sedan, the Empress of the French, whose life was unsafe in the Tuileries, was conducted to the house of Dr. Evans, the friend and confidant of the Emperor. The next morning she left Paris in Dr. Evans's own carriage, accompanied by a single attendant and the doctor himself, not even the coachman knowing who she was. Care was taken to hire old and unobtrusive carriages, and to spend as little money as possible. In this way the Empress arrived at Trouville without suspicion, and remained there without observation. When the true story of this episode is published, the narrative of the successful flight to Trouville will form an interesting and instructive pendant to the disastrous flight to Varennes.

THE RECREATIONS OF AN EMINENT LAWYER.

Horæ Sabbaticæ. Reprint of Articles contributed to the *Saturday Review*. By Sir James Fitzjames Stephen. First Series. London: Macmillan & Co. 1892.

If one comes to this collection and reprint with some knowledge of the common tradition about Sir James Stephen's early connection with the *Saturday Review*, it is difficult to repress a certain feeling of disappointment. This is amply qualified and supplanted as we proceed, but it must inevitably be felt at first. The punning title, "Horæ Sabbaticæ," seems to promise some fun, and throws the mind back on the ancient history of the time when a set of young men took possession of a newly started journal, and made their power felt in the land by a free application of the tomahawk and scalping-knife to what they considered ignorance and incompetence. If tradition is not a liar, they were young and strong, and not at all tender-hearted, and made the day of the Jewish Sabbath anything but a day of rest for writers of books and others who had exposed themselves to public comment. The irreverent wit of the title "Horæ Sabbaticæ" recalls the turbulent youth of the *Saturday Review*—the "Saturday Reviler" as it was nicknamed by its victims—and inclines one for a moment to expect lively revelations.

But if such an expectation—a very wicked and indecorous one, it must be confessed—does cross our mind as we take up Sir James Stephen's reprint, it is very quickly dispelled. Here we have no resuscitation of forgotten "perstringings," whether or not it is really the case that Sir James ever plied the rod with unsparing hand. These reprints are in every respect worthy of an ornament of the Bench. They are excellent reading, and they have the merit, although they are but a collection of reviews, of forming a book—a book with a unity of purpose. This they owe to the reviewer's strong personality, and to a rare combination of definite and limited serious interests with a certain openness of mind to collateral trivialities. The serious interests have determined the choice of books, and are kept tenaciously in view throughout; but the reviewer is not so intent upon them that he cannot glance aside at anything amusing that comes in his way, and consequently he is able to enrich his dissertations with much pleasant gossip. Anybody familiar with Joinville, or Froissart, or Philippe de Comines must enjoy Sir James Stephen's reviews of their memoirs, if only in admiring the masterly skill with which he collects from them the leading political ideas of their respective periods. It is done with such luminous ease, and without the least touch of pedantry, the writer showing throughout a humorous relish for oddities of character as unfeigned as his robust liking for a clear framework of dates. Reading these old chroniclers in order to get at the heart of their thoughts about the rights and duties of Kings, Lords, and Commons must be admitted to be a grave employment worthy of a judge, while the anecdotes that he selects and comments upon with manifest enjoyment are none the worse for being chosen with an instructive purpose.

The general reader, to whom Sir James's digest of Froissart's "Chronicles" or Hacket's "Life of Archbishop Williams" may be commended without hesitation, will not follow him so easily through his examination of our great divines—Hooker, Chillingworth, and Jeremy Taylor. His own intellect is powerful enough to move through the "Ecclesiastical Polity" or the "Ductor Dubitantium" with as much ease as through the gossip of Froissart or Hacket: to summarise the contents and extract the leading ideas is evidently but a congenial recreation to him. "The only really painful feeling," he says, "experienced in reading our standard divines, arises from contrasts between the manliness of the past and the affectation, timidity, and obscurity of the present. If any theological writer should arise with a gift of perfect plainness of speech, perfect distinctness and honesty of thought, and a due coldness of manner, he would be as welcome, perhaps not as flowers in May, but as a sharp frost after a November fog." This is characteristic. For Sir James Stephen the attraction of our great divines lies in this, that they make conscience and reason the ultimate tests of moral and religious truth. It is to make good this proposition that he reviews their works. The reviews were certainly worth reprinting, not merely as a monument of the author's intellectual vigour, but as a solid contribution to the history of opinion. Nothing could surpass the clearness of his exposition. And although in dealing with Montaigne he protests against levity of style as a habit, and himself keeps steadily to a serious purpose, he often puts difficult points with a plainness and force that has all the charm of wit. The great divines of the seventeenth century dealt with great questions in a noble spirit, and it will be some time before we get abler appreciations of them than are contained in these reprints.

THE DAWN OF ART.

Dawn of Art in the Ancient World: an Archæological Sketch. By William Martin Conway, sometime Roscoe Professor of Art in University College, Liverpool, Victoria University. London: Percival & Co. 1891.

The genesis of this work, as hinted at in its candid preface, is a pleasing example of the art and mystery of book-making. Mr. Conway delivers three lectures at the Royal Institution, re-writes them—whereby they are "approximately doubled in length"—and sends them forth into the world in a comfortable

padding, consisting, in front, of a lecture on the Succession of Ideals, "not in perfect harmony with the chapters that follow"; and behind, of a reprint of an article on the Cats of Ancient Egypt, which "amplifies in some respects one or more of the subjects referred to or discussed in the earlier chapters." The author might safely have dragged in, on these terms, any further stray papers in his portfolio, as the "previous chapters" are—to quote again from the preface—"an account of the deductions, impressions, hardy generalisations, and even sometimes (if you will) of the guesses of an individual mind" concerning the early artistic history of mankind.

The first of these "end-papers," however, is not merely irrelevant. It is an inaugural address before a college of Victoria University, full of second-rate quotations and halting grandiloquence, that now recalls Mr. Robert Montgomery with outpourings like this, "Memory is but a feeble glimmer in the lamp of delight"; now attains a more modern flippancy in bathos, "The glorious Parthenon existed long enough in tolerable repair to find itself sent to heaven by gunpowder." The essay on the Cats of Ancient Egypt contains a delightful theory accounting for the domestication of that animal—"one of the greatest triumphs of human perseverance," quotes Mr. Conway from some great unknown. It seems that the wild cat was the totem of some prehistoric Egyptian tribe, and these creatures met with such deferential treatment in consequence that in a thousand years or so they "walked into the parlour" and made themselves at home.

The main part of the work deals with the beginnings of art in the ages of stone and bronze, and its development in Egypt and Chaldæa; and we are promised at the outset a historical rather than an æsthetic treatment, especially designed to open up communication between these various areas of archæology, which Mr. Conway appears to think have suffered from isolated investigation. The programme is enticing, but delusive. The chapters on the prehistoric age are a compilation from the little text-books, with here and there the compiler's own musings, whereof a single specimen may suffice: "The palæolithic huntsman, in the intervals of the chase . . . was a man of leisure. The unsavoury rubbish-heaps that surrounded his dwelling were full of fine antlers and well-scraped bones. What more natural than that, being a person of artistic impulse, he should have picked up one of his pointed flint implements and fallen to engraving with it for the mere pleasurable filling of the time, just as the Swiss peasantry to-day take to wood-carving when the winter's snow deprives them of their outdoor occupations?"

As Mr. Conway leaves these happy hunting-grounds and enters upon the historic period, with which his earlier publications have shown him not incompetent to deal, he begins to be readable, though woefully *décousu*. His speculations on the development of Egyptian architecture are ingenious and novel, and several of his crude suggestions as to inter-influence might have been worked out with profit; but of course there is not room for everything, especially if you want to ask "who shall show us so much as a fragment of the robes of Solomon in all his glory?" and generally to waste space with artless conundrums.

A HANDBOOK OF PSYCHOLOGY.

PSYCHOLOGY: A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE HUMAN MIND. By F. S. Granger, M.A., Lecturer in University College, Nottingham. London: Methuen & Co. 1891. (University Extension Series.)

THE English text-books of psychology are not numerous, and, just at present, are not very satisfactory. The rapid progress of late years in the experimental branch of the science in Germany and America—though not, unfortunately, in England—has made such books as Professor Bain's almost obsolete. Mr. Sully's work is sound enough, but rather too verbose, and the author is too much inclined to improve the occasion, especially with reference to the work of the educator. Even Dr. Carpenter's admirable work requires to be supplemented from recent research. The little book before us makes no claim to be original, but it is an admirable compendium of the elements of the science, at any rate up to a recent date. There is a clear and concise account of the structure of the brain, the nervous system, and the sense organs, which it would take the student a great deal of labour to extract for himself from larger and more technical works—though more, we think, might with advantage have been said of the provisions for storing energy in the nervous system. Mr. Granger insists, too, in a manner quite in harmony with current knowledge, on the extreme complexity of all mental phenomena. "The typical mental operation is neither thought, nor feeling, nor act, taken singly; it is impression followed by movement." After this we can forgive him his rather crude division—after Mill—of the causes of mental states into states of mind and states of body, and his neglect to emphasise the truth that the simple sensation is a mere ideal—mind as we know it being always unstable and indefinitely complex. There is a capital account of attention—following, on the whole, the lines of Wundt—and sound analyses of the various aspects of mental activity. Now and then the book bears traces of the jests inevitable in a lecture—just as the note-books do in which Eudemus, or some other person or persons, has handed down to us his impressions of Aristotle's lectures, and which now form one version of the "Ethics." In both cases some of them might have been eliminated; as when, for instance, the Associationist psychology is ascribed by Mr. Granger to the accumulation of small deposits in savings banks. If properly worked up, this might not be a bad illustration, but as a bit of the history of philosophy it can hardly be serious. Most of the examples given, however, are suggestive and useful. Altogether, the book can be cordially recommended, both for examination purposes and to the general public, especially to those University Extension Students for whom it is primarily designed. The weak point, indeed, both of this work and of some others in the same series, is that they hardly leave the Extension lecturer enough to say.

HISTORICAL ECONOMICS.

THE INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL HISTORY OF ENGLAND. By the late James E. Thorold Rogers. Edited by his son, Arthur G. L. Rogers. London: T. Fisher Unwin. 1892.

THIS volume consists of lectures delivered at Oxford by Professor Thorold Rogers in the autumn of 1888 and the spring of 1889. According to the editor, they "aimed rather at expounding the methods used by his father in his studies than at announcing new facts or enunciating new theories." The tendency of these methods is briefly expressed in the title of another of the author's works quoted in the preface—"The Economic Interpretation of History." Nothing, he continually insists, is more futile than the abstract mode of treatment adopted by the earlier economists. On this ground he attacks Mill's argument for buying out the landlords, which, he says, was based on Ricardo's theory of rent, and the assumption that "the present is the limit of the future." If, as Ricardo and Mill asserted, an increase in rent were really the result of a rise in prices, the landlord would rightly be regarded as a public enemy. But, as a matter of fact, rent is the outcome of profits, not prices; and, therefore, the landlord who consults his true interests will lessen the costs of production by introducing improvements in the process of agriculture. Mill was further mistaken in supposing that the supply of agricultural produce would diminish and prices rise in proportion. The high cost of freight gave plausibility to his view, but it has been falsified by the actual course of events. After refuting Mill and George, Professor Rogers gives us his own view of the strained relations now existing between landlords and tenants—their causes and their possible remedy.

In his discussion of every feature of industrial activity, Professor Rogers made use of his vast historical knowledge, and his lectures are rendered the more interesting by his breadth of view, for he does not regard political and social influences as lying outside his sphere. In some cases, however, it must be admitted that the historical part of the discussion is more interesting for its own sake than for its bearing on questions of the present day. Thus the immigration of Flemish weavers in the fourteenth and of French Huguenots in the seventeenth century does not throw much light on that of agricultural labourers to the towns or of Jewish refugees to East London. In regard to the latter movements, Mr. Rogers considers his father to have held incorrect views, which have been disproved by subsequent information. Mr. Llewellyn Smith has pointed out that immigrants from the country, far from "going to swell the ranks of unskilled labour," take the place of the effete London population in employments requiring both a strong physique and high qualifications of mind or character, and that the supply is kept up by a constant communication between old settlers and their relations in the village at home. If this view is well-grounded it gives a more hopeful aspect to the movement; but two unpleasant features remain—the decline of agriculture and the deterioration in the population of large towns.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS.*

THE University Extension movement has already called some excellent manuals into existence, and amongst the rest Dr. Mill's "Realm of Nature," an outline sketch on wise and original lines of physiography, deserves honourable mention. The avowed aim of the book is to illustrate the principles of science by applying them to the world we live in, as well as to explain the methods by which our knowledge of nature has been obtained and is being enlarged. We are reminded at the outset that physiography means literally the description of nature, and that nature, properly understood, is a term which covers not only all created things, but also all the transformations to which they are subjected. A bold attempt is made in these pages to define the place of physical science in the sphere of human knowledge, and to bring into prominence the inter-relations of the various special sciences. The book is not intended for school use or for examination purposes: indeed, it very creditably fulfils its own aim, which is to educate rather than to inform. Facts are traced back in this book to the principles from which they spring, whilst the statement of details is made to contribute to the student's knowledge of the working of general laws. In other words, the book is scientific in method, and as it is also simple in statement and comprehensive in scope, it merits recognition as a sound and admirable epitome of knowledge. There are nearly twenty coloured maps, and numerous text illustrations or diagrams, and reference is facilitated by numbered paragraphs and a full index.

It is possible to say a good word for "Children's Stories in English Literature" as a genial and well-intentioned, though not otherwise remarkable, book. The title seems to us, however, quite misleading. Youths and maidens who have made considerable progress in their teens may appreciate the book, but children, in the usual acceptation of the term—unless, indeed, they are abnormally precocious—are hardly likely to be enamoured by it. Moreover, whilst there are a good many biographical facts in the volume and some attempts at literary criticism, "stories" are conspicuous by their absence. The truth is, Miss Wright has woven gracefully together glimpses of the personal history of many distinguished authors from the time of Shakespeare to that of Tennyson, and appreciative descriptions of the writings on which their fame rests, but in doing so she quite sails over the heads of the children for whose enlightenment her book is primarily intended.

In the course of last summer the Rev. W. T. McCormick, it appears, enjoyed "A Ride Across Iceland," and those who look forward to a similar experience in the approaching holiday season may consult his modest volume with advantage. He gives a good-humoured, but rather superficial, account of his wild adventures: but he has not taken the trouble to divide his desultory and somewhat carelessly written narrative into chapters, much less to provide the volume with index or map. On the whole, Mr. McCormick's impressions of the Icelanders were distinctly favourable; but evidently they need yet to learn that cleanliness is next to godliness.

We are glad to welcome a new edition of the charming sketch of the haunts and habits of the "Red Deer" which the late Richard Jefferies first published eight years ago. It is interesting to learn that so greatly has popular opinion changed during the last thirty years on the borders of Devon and Somerset, that the deer are protected to such an extent that their numbers have greatly increased. Minute observation of the ways of the deer and quaint scraps of folk-lore abound in the book, whilst the freshness of the moors pervades its pages. Mr. Jefferies declares that with the red deer of old-world England the old-world hospitality and friendliness still lingers; indeed, he claims that around Exmoor one can understand what our fathers meant when they spoke of merry England. "Wild as Exmoor is, and far from the centres of civilisation, there is more courtesy and kindliness in the inhabitants of Red Deer Land, than where the right to lead the van of modern life is loudly claimed." The deer are no longer confined to the moors; they roam over a region of which Exmoor forms only a corner. In fact, Red Deer Land really means a large part of Somerset and Devon, Exmoor, and portions of Dartmoor, the Dunkerry Hills, and the steep Quantocks, besides numerous minor ranges.

"The Advanced Class-Book of Modern Geography" deals with the physical, political, and commercial aspects of the science in a clear and thoroughly satisfactory manner. We have tested the information at various points, and have come to the conclusion that the book is in every way admirably adapted for the purposes of tuition in schools and colleges. Apparently, no pains have been spared to bring the book thoroughly up to date and to make it, in every sense, a reliable exponent of the geographical knowledge of the present day.

The great and ever-widening interest in the movement for rendering education more practical, and for bringing about a simultaneous development of the mental and physical powers of the young, is responsible for quite a new class of school-books. There lies before us, for example, a little volume of "Directions for Making Slöjd Models." The fundamental principles on which this new and ingenious Swedish system is based are not open to question, but as yet comparatively little progress has been made—at all events, in England—in the practical application of the method. The object of Slöjd is, of course, not so much the fashioning by children of a number of useful or ornamental articles, but the training of the eye and the hand so that manual dexterity, judgment, and the sense of proportion are developed side by side in the pupil. This manual is intended for the use of teachers of the system, and it contains a graduated set of exercises. The caution of a popular proverb, which relates to children and edged tools, is completely set aside by Slöjd, since one of the first directions in the book runs as follows:—"The knife, as the fundamental tool, is the first which should be placed in the hands of the children." We imagine that in schools where this direction is followed, it will be found advisable to keep an ample supply of sticking-plaster in the master's desk.

A book for boys which we can heartily recommend is Mr. Francillon's imaginative setting of ancient legends which have helped to shape the literature of the modern world. At the outset of the volume, he admits that the mythology adopted is of the old-fashioned order which appeals to Ovid as its leading authority and which ignores the difference between the divinities of Greece and those of Rome. Scientific and comparative mythology is all very well in its way, but not when the heart is young, the imagination vivid, and the critical faculty dormant. The book follows different lines to those adopted by Hawthorne and Kingsley, and yet we are by no means sure that an ordinary lad—who, as a rule, is by no means a slave to established reputations—would not prefer Mr. Francillon's method of handling stories which have charmed almost countless generations. He is to be congratulated on the due observance of the "Maxima Reverentia," and this lends an air of reality to the marvellous deeds which the book recounts. Jupiter and Apollo, Minerva and Venus, Mercury and Neptune, figure prominently in these pages, and the adventure of Perseus, the story of the Golden Fleece, the labours of Hercules and other classical tales are duly recorded. The coloured full-page illustrations which are given in the volume, though not examples of high art, are at least vigorous enough to satisfy a boy's sense of the eternal fitness of things.

Some curious sidelights on the social as well as the ecclesiastical annals of the West of England will be found in Mr. Alford's scholarly volume on "The Abbots of Tavistock." Tavistock Abbey was founded and munificently endowed by Ethelred II., and all through the Middle Ages its abbots played a notable part in the history of the realm. After the dissolution of the monasteries, the record of Tavistock dwindles and grows meagre, but the present vicar, whose antiquarian tastes are evidently marked, has gathered into these pages the lingering traditions of the parish and has contrived to render the closing chapters of this modest but valuable contribution to local history almost as interesting as those which describe the personal characteristics and tenure of power of a long succession of abbots.

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* THE REALM OF NATURE: AN OUTLINE OF PHYSIOGRAPHY. By Hugh Robert Mill, D.Sc. Maps and Illustrations. London: John Murray, Albemarle Street. Crown 8vo. (5s.)

CHILDREN'S STORIES IN ENGLISH LITERATURE FROM SHAKESPEARE TO TENNYSON. By Henrietta C. Wright. London: T. Fisher Unwin. Crown 8vo.

A RIDE ACROSS ICELAND IN THE SUMMER OF 1891. By the Rev. W. T. McCormick. Portrait. London: Digby Long & Co. Crown 8vo. (2s. 6d.)

RED DEER. By Richard Jefferies, Author of "The Gamekeeper at Home," etc. Illustrated. Second Edition. London and New York: Longmans, Green & Co. Crown 8vo. (3s. 6d.)

THE ADVANCED CLASS-BOOK OF MODERN GEOGRAPHY—PHYSICAL, POLITICAL, COMMERCIAL. By William Hughes, F.R.G.S., and J. Francon Williams, F.R.G.S. London and Liverpool: George Philip & Son. Crown 8vo.

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GODS AND HEROES; OR, THE KINGDOM OF JUPITER. By R. E. Francillon. Illustrated. Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood & Sons. Crown 8vo.

THE ABBOTS OF TAVISTOCK, WITH VIEWS BEYOND. By the Rev. D. P. Alford, M.A. Illustrated. Plymouth: W. Brendon & Sons. Crown 8vo.

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